

8095 THE
Devout Christian's
PREPARATIVE
TO
DEATH.

Written by
ERASMUS,

Now render'd into *English*.

To which are added,

Meditations, Prayers and
Directions

FOR

Sick and Dying Persons.

By ROBERT WARREN, D.D.
Rector of *Charlton in Kent*.

Recommended as proper to be
given at FUNERALS.

The Sixth Edition.

LONDON: Printed for *Edward*
Parker, at the Bible and Crown
in *Lombard-Street*, 1718.

TO THE
HONOURABLE
SIR W. LANGHORN, Bt.

His Truly Worthy PATRON,

IN A

Due Acknowledgment of his Real
MERITS,

AND A

Grateful Sense of His Repeated

FAVOURS,

This Translation of

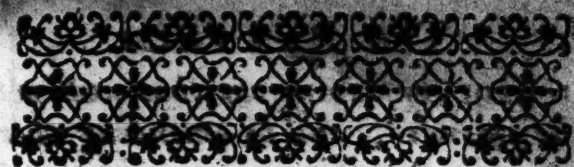
ERASMUS

Is most Humbly Dedicated
and Presented,

BY

His most Humble, Oblig'd;
and entirely Devoted Servant,

R. WARREN



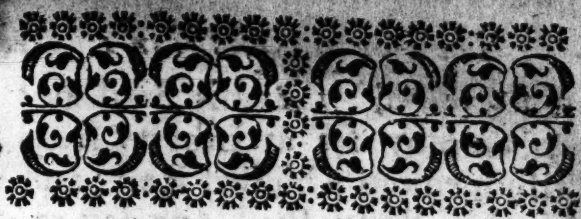
THE PREFACE.

ERASMUS is an Author of so great Repute, both for the Piety and Exactness of His Writings, that nothing need be said by the Translator to recommend or set Him off. In His own dress He bids defiance to the Critic. However, this must be allowed, that He appears in some Places a little tainted with the Errors of Rome, tho' in others, He severely lashes them. In this Respect He carries Matters so even, that the wisest and most judicious Men have been at a loss, to know where to place Him. But that the Pious English Reader should have no cause for Complaint; Care is taken to make Him speak every where like a Pro-

THE PREFACE.

testant, by leaving out what could not be amended, and by amending what could. And 'tis in this only that I have departed from the Sense of this Renown'd Scholar and Practical Divine: Which is such an Injury, as I hope will easily be forgiven; especially since in other Parts I have throughout the whole almost Verbal-ly Translated Him, which perhaps some may dislike, as less agreeable to the Smoothness and Elegancy of the Stile. But as the Work was undertaken for the Good of Pious Christians in order to fortifie their Minds against the Terrors of DEATH; not to satisfy the rigid unreasonable Demands of Supercilious Pedants, but to inform the Ignorant, and Confirm the Dubious: So this was the design of the Translator too, in rendring it into the Language of our Country: That the Excellent Thoughts of so worthy a Man might not be wholly lost to those who did not understand the Original.

THE



THE
Devout Christian's
PREPARATIVE
TO
DEATH.



OF all the Things that are Terrible in the World, *Death* is the most Terrible, said *Aristotle*, a very famous Heathen Philosopher ; but he said so, because he had not heard our Heavenly Philosopher, who hath instructed us not only by his Words, but likewise by his Example, That Man doth not perish by the Death of the Body, but his Parts

6 *The Devout Christian's*

are separated ; that his Soul being thereby set at Liberty from Prison, enjoys a blessed Rest ; and that his Body shall one day revive, to be a Sharer in that Glory. He had not heard that Maxim of the *Holy Ghost*, Rev. 14. 13. *Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord.* He never heard St. Paul speak and groan and beg for Death, that he might be with Jesus Christ : Phil. 1. 23. Being persuaded, that for him, *to live was Christ, and to die was Gain.* v. 21. It is no wonder, that those who think that Man perishes wholly, and who are without Hope, which only Faith in Christ affords us, should both deplore the Death of others, and also dread and abhor their own.

But it appears Amazing, that People instructed in *Christian Philosophy*, and that profess it, should be afraid of Death, as if they believed, that there was nothing of Man remained after Death, or distrusted the Promises

of

Preparative to Death. 7

of *Jesus Christ*, or despaired of their own *Salvation*. The first is the part of *Epicures*; the second of *Incredulous People*; the third of those that are ignorant of *God's Mercy*.

In this Particular they resemble the *Gentiles* very much, who know not *God*. For he knows not *God* who knows not that he is of infinite *Mercy*.

'Tis, without all Controversy, that the Reason why the generality of Mankind are so afraid at the Thoughts of *Death*, proceeds partly from the weakness of their *Faith*, and partly from the great Love they have for the things of this World. For that Man can never be afraid, who is able to say with full assurance, as *St. Paul* does, *Rom. 14. 8. Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: therefore, whether we live or die we are the Lord's.* That which the *Lord* hath once taken into his Care and Tuition, can

8 *The Devout Christian's*

never perish. Whence that Saying of the Prophet, which is a true Testimony of undaunted Courage and Resolution, *Psal. 23. 4. Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil: For thou art with me. God, who is Faithful and Just, never at any time forsakes those who have committed themselves solely to his Care and Conduct, but keeps them as the Apple of the Eye, Psal. 17. 8. He is the Lord of Life, as well as of Death, with whom nothing is dead; but all Things live, which through Faith depend on him.*

From the Weakness of our Faith springs the Love of Temporal Advantages. For if we would stedfastly believe the Promises which God hath made to us by his Son *Jesus*, we would easily despise the Pleasures of this Life; and *Death*, which deprives us of them, and conveys us with a something troublesome

Silber

(but

Preparative to Death. 9

(but yet short) Passage, would appear less frightful. The *Wise Man* cries out, *Ecclus. 41. 1. O Death! how bitter is the Remembrance of thee?* But what says he farther? To a Man that liveth at Rest in his Possessions? He doth not say, to a Man that possesseth Riches, for that agrees with many good Men, but to a Man that liveth at rest in them.

What hath been spoken of Riches, may be understood of Honours, Pleasures, Wives, Children, Relations, Friends, of Beauty, Youth, and good Health; in short, of all kind of Benefits of which *Death* equally deprives both Good and Bad. The more fond we are of any thing, the greater is the Reluctancy of being forc'd from it. If thou art in Love with any thing, thou shalt lay it down against thy Will, saith a certain wise Pagan: And he is in Love with these Temporary things, that resteth in them, as his proper and perpetual Goods;

A 5. where

10 *The Devout Christian's*

whereas they are lent but for a while, and Transitory, to be quitted not only Patiently, but Thankfully, as oft as the Donor demands them.

For, to rest in this World's Goods, is to enjoy those things which one ought only to use, and that but by the by ; just as in a Pilgrimage : according to the *Apostle's* Exhortation to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. *It remaineth that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this World, as not abusing it : for the fashion of this World passeth away.* We are only Travellers in this World. and have no lasting abode here ; we are Strangers in it, who lodge in Tents, and not as Citizens, who are settled in their own Country. This whole Life is but one continued Race towards Death, and

Breeches

Preparative to Death. II

a Race that is soon finished ; but *Death* is the Gate, by which we enter into Eternal Life.

Among the *Jews*, because Contracts and Bargains, by the determinate Rule of their Law, were ended at a certain Day, the shorter the space of time was to it, the smaller was the price and value of their Goods. How little then ought we to esteem all those Pleasures which last but for a Moment, which are liable to so many Accidents, and which *Death* will certainly deprive us of, though no other Accident should do it?

We are to remember, that they who run Races observe how much Ground they leave behind them, how much they want to the Mark ; and in former times, they who look'd for the *Jubilee*, knew how long they were to enjoy what they had bought. But no mortal Man can be assured, that he shall live the next Day. We run but with *Death* in our
A 6 Feet,

12 *The Devout Christian's*

Feet, yea, bearing it about with us in our whole Body.

We have receiv'd our Life from God, only with this Condition, to be ready to return it back to him every moment when he calls for it. Tho' he should grant us an extraordinary long Life, which is a very rare thing, yet what is the whole Life of Man but a very short time in which we run our Race, whether we will or no, whether we sleep or wake, whether we live in Pleasure or in Pain?

The perpetual course of Years, like an impetuous Torrent, carries us to the end of it, though we and others think that we continue always in the same State; Therefore if we estimate Worldly Things by the Shortness of their Duration, they must necessarily be very mean, which have not so much as one Hour certain. And we easily part from those things for which we have but little Value. Like Men upon a Journey, if they meet with
Master any

Preparative to Death. 13

any thing either in the Road or Inn that pleases them, they don't very much set their Minds on it, because they have not long to stay ; or in case of Difficulty and Inconveniency, they bear it patiently considering that the time's but short. I dine here, but shall sup in another Place. *The Things which are seen, are Temporal; the Things which are not seen, are Eternal;* saith St. Paul, 2 Cor. 4. 18. We should learn to contemn all Temporal and Terrestrial things, by fixing our Thoughts upon the consideration of Heavenly and Eternal Blessings.

Plato thought all *Philosophy* nothing else but a *Meditation* on *Death*; meaning by *Meditation* a *Preparative*, such a sort of Exercise as that of raw Soldiers, who fit themselves for Fight at the Fencing School. This is a noble Saying, if what was spoken in a Philosophical, be understood in a Christian Sense. For neither the Contemplation of Mathemat-
tical

14 *The Devout Christian's*

tical Figures separate from Matter, nor the Conception of Platonical Idea's, cause us to die well; but if, by the Eye of Faith, we consider those good things passing all Human Understanding, which God hath promised to those that believe in him by his Son *Jesus Christ*, and the evil things which he hath threatened to Unbelieving and rebellious Sinners; these will deter us from Sinning, those will provoke us to do well.

I do not deny but there may be everlasting Truth in some parts of human Learning, but 'twill never gain one *true Happiness*.

Now he is Eternal who hath promised, he also is Eternal by whom he hath promised; Eternal the things he hath promised, Eternal Happiness to them, that with Faith embrace them; Eternal Misery to them that slight and disregard them. This Meditation of *Death* is in reality a

Winchester M. di-

Preparative to Death. 15

Meditation of Life. A Meditation that doth not only effect what the Philosopher promises, that the Soul shall depart willingly from the Tenement of the Body, but that with Chearfulness and Joy, it shall leap as it were, out of a grievous and obscure Confinement into blessed Liberty, and into that truly amiable Light, which knows no Night nor Darkeness. *For the Corruptible Body presseth down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that museth upon many things, Wisdom 9. 15.* On which account the inspired Psalmist cries out, *Psal. 142. 7. Bring my Soul out of Prison, that I may praise thy Name, O Lord.*

Man's chief Good consists in praising and contemplating his Creator and Redeemer. This is the End for which he was created. The Weakness of this Body in which the Soul is shut up, which is subject to so many Infirmities, Necessities, Evils, and
Dangers,

16 *The Devout Christian's*

Dangers, disturbs often-times this Happiness. This made St. Paul, wearied with his fleshly Tabernacle, groan miserably, and cry out, *Rom. 7. 24. O Wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death!* For he saw that they were the most Blessed and Happy, who dwelt in the House of the Lord, praising him for ever and ever. This has been the Disposition of truly Pious Men, whose Bodies, tho' they live below upon the Earth, yet their Treasure, Heart, and Conversation are above in Heaven. But there are very few such eminently Pious Persons as these. It is not granted to every one to say with St. Paul, *To me to live is Christ, to die is Gain. I desire to depart and to be with Christ.* We who our selves are Weak, provide this Comfort for the Weak, to whom yet the Examples of good Men are as Spurs to get strength of Spirit. Therefore during our whole Life we ought

Preparative to Death. 17

to meditate upon *Death*, and excite our *Faith*, that it may be increased and strengthened; and accompanied with *Charity*, may produce in us an *Hope* which maketh not ashamed, *Rom. 5. 5.* We have not any of these things of our selves; they are the Gifts of *God*, which we ought to beg of him by continual Prayer, if they be wanting; if we have them, to be improved, that they may increase. The more our *Faith* is joined with *Charity*, and the more stedfast it is thro' *Hope*, the less shall we be afraid of *Death*. For that most of us are so afraid at the bare mention of *Death*, proceeds (as we have shewn) in a great measure from the weakness of our *Faith*. And especially concerning the Promises of *God*; it is most requisite, that our *Faith* be stedfast and immoveable. For *God* is One who being true by Nature, can in no wise deny himself. To whom the Royal Psalmist sings aloud,
Psal.

18 *The Devout Christian's*

Psal. 119. 89, 90. For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in Heaven. Thy Faithfulness is unto all Generations. Who likewise says thus of himself in the Holy Gospel, Mar. 13. 31. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away. But what hath he promised? why, Victory over Death, the Flesh, the World, and Satan. He hath promised Remission of Sins, he hath promised an Hundred-fold in this World, and everlasting Life in the World to come.

But upon what Terms and Conditions hath he promis'd these Benefits? for our Righteousness? No, in no wise, but thro' the Grace of *Faith*, which is in *Christ Jesus*. And that we might be more secure, the former Hand-writing, which the first *Adam* had unhappily decypher'd for us, he hath made of none effect, fastning it to the Cross, and hath given us the Covenant of Grace, which he hath sealed with his own Blood, and confirmed by the

nu-

numerous Testimonies of Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Virgins, who have also subscribed with their Blood. The whole Communion of Saints hath also subscribed. In the mean time he hath given us the *Earnest of the Spirit*, 2 Cor. 1. 22. That our Faith may not stagger in any point.

Moreover, the Goodness of God, not thinking this enough, hath vouchsafed to all a plain and manifest Example of this Victory in his *only begotten Son*. For that which he overcame, he overcame in behalf of his Members, who gave himself wholly for us. For what had we poor Worms been able to have done of our selves? *Christ* is our Righteousness, *Christ* our Victory, *Christ* our Hope and Security, *Christ* is our Crown and Triumph. He was born a Child, and, as *Esaias* hath acquainted us, Chap. 9. 6. *He was born unto Us: he was given unto Us.*

He taught also for us, healed Diseases for us, cast out Devils,
was

20 *The Devout Christian's*

was an Hungry and Thirsty for us; He was Reviled and Reproached for us, He was struck with Horror and Heaviness at the point of Death for us, He sweat Blood for us, He was bound and beaten for us, He died and rose again for us. Finally, He sits at the right Hand of the Father for us. Whilst he took upon him all the Punishments which were due to us, after their Force was quashed, and after we had receiv'd the Power and Virtue of the Spirit, proportionable to our Afflictions. After this, he resign'd 'em over to us in order to subdue and conquer them. He has shew'd the way how, given us Courage for the Fight, and assists us in it. Thus he overcomes in us, if *so be we abide in him; and we abide in him through Faith and Charity.*

It any one makes enquiry where this Writing is which secures us, we answer, in the Holy Scriptures, wherein we read
the

Preparative to Death. 21

the Words of God, and not of Men. These you are to believe as firmly, as if God himself had spoken them to you with his own Mouth, nay, I may say more firmly. For if God should have spoke to you by some created *Appearances*, perhaps you would be inclin'd to doubt (as some pious Men have done) whether there was no deceit at the bottom. But the Consent of the whole Catholick Church (*evidencing that these Books are Divine and Canonical*) hath left no room for Suspicion; to be studious then in these Writings as long as we live, is the best *Preparative to Death*. As the Apostle saith, *Rom. 15. 4. That we through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope.*

Again, if any one ask after what manner, and at what time *Christ* overcame these? He overcame the *Flesh*, and shew'd the manner of overcoming it, when in the Nature he had taken upon him

22 *The Devout Christian's*

him being sore afraid of *Death*, he saith to his Father, *Luke 22. 42. Not my Will, but thy Will be done.* And in another Place he testifies of himself, *John 5. 30. I seek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath sent me.* There is nothing so terrible to humane Nature, but what may be overcome by the Assistance of *Jesus Christ*, if we will resign our selves entirely to the good Will of *God*, and patiently submit to his Divine Pleasure; and always, in our most grievous Afflictions, have in our Mind the Saying of good old *Eli*, *1 Sam. 3. 18. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.* These Words are not Magical, but yet of more Power and Efficacy than all Enchantments. Whosoever shall speak these Words from the bottom of his Heart, and stedfastly continue in this Faith, he hath no cause to despair, even tho' the whole Army of Evils, together with the Powers of Hell, should rush in upon him alone. He

Preparative to Death. 23

He is Almighty that fighteth for us, and who saith in the Psalm, *Psal. 91. 15. I will be with him in Trouble, I will deliver him and honour him.* When thou hearest, *I will be with him in Trouble,* regard not thine own Strength, but the Power of him that helpeth thee; when thou hearest, *I will deliver him,* don't despair, tho' thy Afflictions last long, he will undoubtedly perform his Promise, and knows which is the properest Season to rescue thee from Troubles. When thou hearest, *I will honour him,* be well assured, that as thou hast been a Copartner of the Cross with *Christ*, so thou shalt also be a Partaker with him of Glory. But remember what went before, *He cried unto me.* It is thy Duty to cry, and to cry unto the *Lord*; not to the Succour of the World, not to thine own Strength and Well-doing, but unto the *Lord*, who alone can deliver thee from thy Afflictions. Nothing is more frail
than

24 *The Devout Christian's*

than humane Nature ! And yet no Man is able to express, how many and how deadly Evils and Calamities it is liable to. For, to say nothing of Thunder, Earthquakes, Inundations of the Sea, and Chasms of the Earth, Wars, Robberies, Murders ; who can reckon up the several kinds of Diseases ? and amongst these how many are there so sad and terrible, that mortal Men tremble at the very mention of them ? of which sort are the Falling Sickness, the Palsie, the Ulcer in the Bladder, the Phrensy. I omit that violent and contagious Distemper, the *Plague*, which spreads it self more and more in spite of all the Physicians Remedies ; so that it may be truly and justly said ;

*A Thousand Fates on Death attend,
Which drag poor Mortals to their end.*

Now how is it possible that we,
who are so weak both in Strength
and

and
qual
Stor
be u
were
the
port
is th
ficul
muc
Man
fecti
ly ca
Lov
of t
ceas
wag
Fore
and
ing
this
Be o
the
stran
of th
whe
Son a
Hea

Preparative to Death. 25

and Resolution, should be an equal match for such powerful Storms of Affliction? We should be utterly undone (though there were no Sin in the Way,) did not the right Hand of the Lord support our Weakness; besides, there is the *World* that adds to the Difficulties of the *Warfare* very much; I call the *World* the *Old Man* with his sinful Lusts and Affections, though we may properly call Men that are given to the Love of this *World* by the name of the *World*, who have never ceased, and never will cease to wage War with their utmost Force and Power against *Christ* and his Disciples. Notwithstanding the Lord Encourages us to this Battel, saying, *John* 16. 33. *Be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World.* But how much estranged he was from the Love of the *World*, he openly declares, when he tells us, *Mat.* 8. 20. *The Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.* For every one lays his

B Head

26 *The Devout Christian's*

Head upon that which his Mind acquiesces in, and as it were falls asleep. But how outrageous and wicked this World is, they cannot be ignorant who seriously endeavour to live Godly in *Christ Jesus*. He hath taken our Lusts upon *himself*, but no otherwise than *he* took our Sin, suffering in our stead the Punishments which were due to our Lusts and Transgressions. Moreover, what Artillery soever this *World* contains, all was display'd against our *Lord*. Contempt, Reproach, Violence, Power, Torments and Death, What did the World leave unattempted utterly to abolish the Name of *Christ*? and behold it lives and flourishes upon Earth, as well as in Heaven! But remember our *Lord* hath overcome, not that we might sleep, but that we might not have any cause to despair. He hath delivered to us our Enemy, not wholly Dead, but Weakned and Vanquishable, that we may receive a Crown of Glory by engaging with

with
the
John
ple t
(saith
meth
Str
your
do n
come
migh
is stil
unha
after
y rel
den,
Body
Th
was r
nath
himse
Ch. 5
Peace
Stripe
same
made
no Sin

Preparative to Death. 27

with him. If you demand, how the *World* may be overcome, St. *John*, our Saviour's Bosom Disciple tells you, 1 *John* 5. 4. *This is (saith he) the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.*

Strive then with Faith, putting your whole trust in the *Lord*, and do not Question but you shall come off Conquerour through his mighty Aid and Assistance. *Sin* is still behind, in which we were unhappily born, and into which after Baptism, we more unhappily relapsed; a sad and heavy Burden, which sinks both Soul and Body into Hell.

This Burden likewise, which was not to be born by us, God hath vouchsafed to take upon himself, as *Isaiah* had prophesied, Ch. 53. 5. *The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with his Stripes we are healed.* To the same purpose, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. he hath made him to be *Sin* for us, who knew no *Sin*, that we might be made the

28 *The Devout Christian's*

Righteousness of God in him. Sin is the only thing which breeds Discord and Enmity between God and Man, as *Isaiab* testifies. But our merciful Father, when no sufficient Sacrifice could be found, to expiate the Sins of Mankind, sent *his Son*, a Lamb without Spot or Blemish, reconciling the World to *himself*, by this most pure Oblation.

But here it may be objected, if by *Christ Sin* is quite taken away, how comes it to pass that the whole Life of Man abounds with *Sin*? for I speak now concerning even good Men. I am sure he did not take away all *Sin*, but weakned the Force and Strength of it; not that there might be no *Sin* in us, but that *Sin* might not Reign in us, as it Reigns in those, who have not fixed the Anchor of their Hope in the *Lord Jesus*, but serve the Flesh and the Lusts thereof. To this end *St. Paul* advises, *Rom. 6. 12.* That we suffer not *Sin* to reign in our mortal Bodies,

there's

Preparative to Death. 29

there's matter for Contention still left ; but the Weapons are prepared, wherewith arming our selves we may be able to overcome ; in this Sense we are made the Righteousness of God, not by our Works, but by *his Grace.* Thro' whom ? Thro' him whom he hath made Sin for us, and for Sin hath condemned Sin.

We have another lurking Enemy still, namely, *Satan*, the Father of both Sin and Death, and Prince of this Darkness ; whose Power and never ceasing malicious Artifices the Children of Light are horribly afraid of, whilst they trembling cry unto their Father, *Luke 11. 4. Lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.*

This is that Tempter and Accuser of the Brethren, who, according to St. Peter's Description, *1 Peter 5. 8. Walketh about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* But the Lord hath vanquished his Enemies Assaults in his own Person, and hath also

30 *The Devout Christian's*

taught us to overcome them. He made very frequent Assaults upon our Lord. For this St. Luke intimates, when he saith, Chap, 4. 13. *And he departed from him for a Season.* But he always went away Conquer'd. How Conquered? Why, being driven back with the *Shield* of the *Holy Scripture*, and wounded with the *Word* of God. Therefore as oft as he prompts us to do any thing which is contrary to God's Will, declared to us in Holy Writ, he must be kill'd, with the *Sword* of the *Holy Word*, and (as *David* dealt with *Goliath*) let us smite him with five smooth Stones gather'd out of the mystical Brook of the *Scriptures*. But when we commence Battel with this *Goliath*, let us first cast aside the Weapons of *Saul*, the Armour of *Pride*. This Armour is the Presumption of *Worldly Wisdom*, too great Confidence in our own Merits and Strength, which rather load than help us. The *Staff* of *Faith*, which comforts and supports

port
and
spea
suffi
trou
me S
tabl
call
a su
and
Ete
the
Pete
fast
ptur
Con
cto
I
wh
by
are
is
wh
our
pos
gir
wh
of

Preparative to Death. 31

ports us in this our Pilgrimage, and the five *Words* which *St. Paul* speaks in the Church, these are sufficient. If he be too busie and troublesome say, *Get thee behind me Satan*; it is much more equitable to obey *Almighty God*, who calls us to *Eternal Glory*, than *thee*, a subtil Fiend, whose only Aim and Endeavour is to entice us to *Eternal Ruin*. There *Faith* acts the principal Part. Whence *St. Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *Whom resist, steadfast in the Faith*. Believe the *Scriptures*; put all your Trust and Confidence in *Christ*, and the *Victory* is your own.

But there are a sort of Devils who will not be cast out, except by *Prayer* and *Fasting*. See here are two other Weapons. And it is not improbable, that *Satan*, when he had so often attacked our *Saviour*, and all to no Purpose, heaped together all his Engines and Devices upon the *Cross*, when he saw him just at the Point of *Death*. This of a certain is

32 *The Devout Christian's*

the last and worst Engagement
the Event of which is either *Eter-
nal Happiness*, or *Perpetual Confu-
sion*. For he saith, *John 14. 30.*
*The Prince of this World cometh
unto me, and hath nothing in me.*
Neither is it in the least to be
questioned, but that which he
durst attempt to do unto *Christ*
himself, he dares do to his Chil-
dren. But as he was overcome
by *him*, so shall he be overcome
by *us*, through *his* Aid and Bless-
ing. For whenever he Assaults
those in whom *Christ* dwells thro'
Faith and *Charity*, he Wages
War with *Christ* himself, in
whom, whilst we faithfully per-
severe, he shall be overcome
by us more shamefully and dis-
gracefully, than by our Lord
himself, *Philip. 5. 13.* *I can do all
Things* (saith the Apostle) thro'
Christ which strengthneth me.

Satan, with whom we Con-
tend, is called *the Prince of this
World*, not that he can claim a-
ny Right or Title to any one
single

sing
cau
tho
that
Hea
mon
wh
Hel
Art
ente
and
Goo
V
of
De
of
stil
aw
Fli
ty.
Na
the
co
in
Na
an
sta

Preparative to Death. 33

single part of the World, but because he Reigns as it were in those that love it. Moreover, he that protects us is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who can do more by his Will alone, than the whole Company of Devils in Hell, by all their treacherous Arts and Fallacies. *He alone can enter into that strong Man's House, and having bound him, spoil his Goods.* Mat. 12. 29.

What is there more remaining of all our Temptations? *Death!* *Death* I say, at the bare naming of which all things are silent and still. This can neither be driven away by Force, nor avoided by Flight, nor deluded by Subtlety.

The first and chief Desire of Nature is, that every thing should defend itself, and always continue what it is. But *Death*, in Opposition to this Instinct of Nature, threatens Destruction; and is so much the more detestable, because it separates the

B s dearest

34 *The Devout Christian's*
dearest Friends. For there is no
Couple closer join'd together, or
more nearly related, than the
Soul and the *Body*.

Now, the Mercy of the *Lord* has
mitigated this horrible Fear. *First*,
because for our sakes *he* did not
refuse to undergo in *his* own Per-
son, the Sorrows of *Death*, nor
even *Death* itself, though both
shameful and bitter. Neither
would *he* have any one of the
Saints, though never so Emi-
nent, to escape *it*. Not *Abra-*
ham, the Father of the Faithful;
not his familiar Friend *Moses*;
not *David*, a Man after his own
Heart; no, not any one of the
Holy Prophets; not *St. John Bap-*
tist, of whom our *Lord* gave a noble
Character; not *his* most beloved
Mother; nor even so much as
that *Disciple*, who was more in
his Affections than any of the
rest. From the first Creation of
Man, even unto the end of the
World, *It is appointed for all once*

to d
led
u
u
equ
Prin
as
gars
F
mu
dur
mo
mu
pai
unc
Me
Im
you
box
tho
hav
Co
Th
Pa
do
far
wi
at

Preparative to Death. 35

to die. Wherefore *Death* is called by the *Greeks*, $\mu\omicron\rho\theta$ *Fate*, $\mu\omicron\rho\theta$ a *præterito μέμολα verbi* $\mu\omicron\rho\theta$ *divido*, because it is allotted equally to all Men; to Kings, Princes and Prelates, as well as to Day-Labourers and Beggars.

How strangely Impatient then must he be, who is loth to endure a *Misfortune* which is common to *all Men*? That which must, whether you will or no, be paid to Nature, do you decline to undergo, together with all holy Men? He who was by Nature Immortal, was made Mortal for you, and do you desire alone above all others, to be Immortal, though you are born to die, and have so often deserved *Death*? Consider well with thy self these Things, how many and what Partners you have, and then no doubt you will bear that Lot far more patiently; for we may with as much Modesty be angry at our being born, or that we

36 *The Devout Christian's*

were not made *Angels*, but *Men* ; as be displeased that we must *Die*.

This is the first way of mitigating the Thoughts of *Death*, and is, I assure you, no small Comfort under them. And it will be more efficacious and beneficial still, if we make a true Judgment, what sort of Things we are to leave behind us. For *Death* seems very Grievous to a great many Men, when they remember only what *Pleasures* they must bid adieu to. Sometimes the pleasing Aspect of the *Sun*, the stately Structure of the *Universe* ; at others the delightful *Beauties* of the *World* in its *Spring*, their *Sports*, *Banquetings*, *Wives*, *Children*, *Houses* and *Gardens* run in their Minds.

But the other *Eye* is to be opened too, by which you may compute how much more numerous the *Evils* are that you leave, and even in *Good Things*, what a deep mixture there is of *Gall* and *Bit-*

Preparative to Death. 37

terness; recollect the whole Course of your Life; how sordidly you was conceiv'd; with what Danger carried about in your *Mother's Womb*; how miserable your *Nativity*; how many Casualties and *Misfortunes* your *Infancy* as well as *Childhood* was exposed to; how many *Vices* your *Youth* was corrupted with; how many *Sorrows* and *Troubles* your riper Years; how painful and burdensome old Age is: I say, call to Mind *all* these *Calamities*, and I mightily Question, whether you can find any one particular Person Born to so good a Fortune, as that if God should be pleased to grant him leave to live over his Life again, from *Conception* to *old Age*, and to enjoy the same *Pleasures* and *Profits*, and to endure the same *Misfortunes*; he would accept of the Conditions.

What *Egregious Folly* is it then in any Man to be so much disturb'd at his *parting* with those Things, which if we might have again, we should refuse to take them? I

38 *The Devout Christian's*

I pass by those *Dangers*, which this *Life* is encompassed with, in so much that some *Heathens* thought the *Gods* had not conferr'd a nobler Boon upon Men, than (to speak in their own Language) the Power to bereave themselves of Life when they thought good. And the famous Poet did not stick to say, That there is no living Creature more miserable than Man; but if the *Heathen Poet's* Opinion be but little to be regarded, the wise Preacher, was not afraid to write, Eccles. 7. v. 1. That the Day of ones Death is better than the Day of ones Birth. So much concerning *Evils*, now of good Things.

Count up what Cares and Troubles *Riches* have been the occasion of, which now you can by no means part with; how much more Aloes than Honey your Wife hath brought, for the Love of whom you are afraid to die; what a deal of Sorrow the Education of your Children hath cost you, and how Offensive and Disgraceful

Preparative to Death. 39

raceful their Behaviour hath been. To all these add the very Mind of Man always inclining to the wicked side. For that saying of St. *Austin's*, *The older a Man grows the worse he is*, though it be not true of all Men, yet is verified of most.

Finally, set the *Pleasures* of this Life on the right Hand, and the Evils and Inconveniencies on the Left, then make a few Reflections upon the short Continuance of the whole time we live here. Infancy is insensible; Childhood takes its flight, whilst we are minding something else than what we ought; Youth is succeeded by manifold Cares; Old Age surprises us unawares; what then is our whole *Life*? verily but a Minute, compared with *Eternity*, which we only are passing into, if we have lived piously; which we are hal'd away into, if we have liv'd impiously. The serious Contemplation of these Things, will be no small Comfort against the *Horror of Death*. There

40 *The Devout Christian's*

There is another thing much more important than this, that the *Lord* by *his* own *Death* has alter'd yours, that it is no more, as formerly, a Passage to everlasting Torments, but to Heaven and Eternal Joy; so that to those that believe in *Christ*, *Death* is now so far from Hurtful, that it is highly Advantageous; and to the end that no part of Man should be missing, he rose with many of his *Saints*, and thereby gave us certain Hope that our Bodies should live at the last Day, and being Glorified, every one of them receive his old Guest the *Soul* again, to which they will no more become Burdens but an exceeding Comfort.

But of *Death* we shall have an Occasion to speak by and by, that we may dispatch what we are about, here is still a more dreadful Evil than all these together; *Hell*! from whence none return, swallowing up all Things, and never disgorging any. This is an *Hell of Despair*. And as the *Apocalypse*

files

files
v. 8.
N
with
that
vil
par
nal
fed
que
rifo
side
Sor
the
un
con
pin

vo
br
tle
th
th
A
H
H
ci
th

Preparative to Death. 41

stiles it, *a Second Death, Chap. 2.*
v. 8.

Now let every one consider with himself, what a kind of *Life* that must be, where the chief Evil is *Immortality*, where a great part of the Torment is the Eternal Society of Devils and accursed Spirits, where the Fire is unquenchable, and ours in Comparison of that is perfect Ice. Besides, Burning is the least of their Sorrows, which are so great that they cannot be conceiv'd by *Man's* understanding; as neither, on the contrary, can the *Everlasting Happiness of Just Men made perfect*.

In other, tho' the most grievous and lasting Evils, Hope brings some Comfort, just as a little bright Star shining afar off in thick Darkness; but in *Hell* there's the greatest Despair, with the sorest Afflictions and Torments. The Horror of this Place exceeds all Horror, which yet our most *Merciful Redeemer*, that he might make the more easy to us, vouchsafed
to

42 *The Devout Christian's*

to take upon *himself*; *his* amazing Agonies in the Garden, and that Extreme Horror which made *him* Sweat Blood, were the Infirmities of our Nature; but when nail'd to the Cross *he* cried, *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the Words of my Roaring?* P^{sa}. 26. 1. He seems to have thoroughly felt the Confusion of Hell in his Mind. For what belongs to those that are forsaken of God but the largest Measures of Despair and Horror?

Neither is it strange that *he* who had taken upon him the Sins of all Men, should suffer this dismal Effect of them, that so two Things, to us unconquerable, might through *his* Mercy, be at last conquer'd by us. This does not detract from the Dignity of our Redeemer; but rather plainly evinces *his* unspeakable Charity towards Mankind. Under this Figure of *him*, saith Holy David,

The

Preparative to Death. 43

The Sorrows of Death compass'd me,
and the Overflowings of the ungodly
made me afraid; The Pains of Hell
gather'd upon me, The Snares of Death
overtook me: Psal. 116. 3. We de-
served Hell Fire, he who was whol-
ly Innocent bore the Confusion
for us, that if the like Affections
invade our Minds, from a Consci-
ousness of our Wickedness, or from
the Infirmary of Nature, we may
not cast away our selves; but ha-
ving our Eyes intent upon Christ,
hope in our very Diffidence. Let
Flesh despair and Reason too, yet
our Faith can call unto the Lord,
even from this Hell; as *Jonah*,
who seem'd to be past all Hope,
cry'd out of the Belly of the Whale,
and was heard. This the Psalmist
verifies by the ensuing Words, in
Distress I called upon the Lord, and
he heard me from his holy Temple,
Psal. 118. 5. The Temple of God
is the Church, this is the Tower of
our Faith, the City of our Strength,
even *Sion*. If any lifts up his
Voice to this Place with but one
single

44 *The Devout Christian's*

single remaining Spark of Faith, he is heard.

Therefore when all humane Strength is confounded, Faith can cry with blessed Job; *Tho' he slay me, yet will I trust in him, 13. 15.* For this is with Abraham the Father of the Faithful, *Rom. 4. 18. Against hope to believe in Hope.* Therefore these great Evils, the Goodness of God hath not only mitigated and weakned; so that tho' they threaten and affrighten us, yet they can in no wise extinguish or root up our Hopes; I say the Goodness of God has not only done this, but moreover turns our severest Losses into the greatest Gains. For what I pray can Sin be able to hurt those, who place their Trust and Confidence in Christ? What but that, where Sin hath abounded, Grace may also abound, and he may Love more to whom more is forgiven?

What matters Satan's continual Affailing the Children of Christ? What doth he do (I would fain know)

know) but augment their Reward, and illustrate their Victories? even those *Afflictions*, which thro' our Mortality, are common both to good and wicked Men, our Redeemer's Tenderness, makes them either *Gain* or *Physick* to us, tho' there be *Gain* even in *Physick*: They are *Gain* to us, if we being freed from *Sin* bear those Things patiently, giving Thanks to the Lord for all. They are *Physick*, if any thing be to be purged away either by *Section*, *Cauterism*, or a bitter *Potion*, of which kind are *Poverty*, *Old Age*, the *Loss of Relations*, and innumerable other Things, which this Life is besieged with. If these Things incite us either to *murmur* or *despair*, or *Blasphemy*; they are the Instruments of the *Devil*, and in lieu of *Medicines* prove *Poisonous*; but if they are only born, because they cannot be avoided, as I am persuaded of them, who knew not *Christ*, and yet constantly endured *Oppression* and *Death*; then they are the *Afflictions*

46 *The Devout Christian's*

itions of Nature. But if we take 'em *Submissively*, as from the Hands of a *Merciful and Loving Father*, and with *Thanksgiving*, considering how much more hard and cruel Things we have justly deserved, and what bitter *Punishments* Christ, who was without Fault, suffered for us, who were guilty; then they are not *Afflictions*, but comfortable *Remedies* or *Improvements* of our Heavenly Rewards: Then unfeigned Thanks are to be given to our most *Indulgent Father*, who *scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. 12. 6. In the mean time healing our Wounds with soft and easy Medicines that he may *pardon* us in the *World* to come. Here it behoves us to admire the unspeakable *Liberality* of our *Captain*, who gives his Soldiers Occasion of shewing their Valour, that their Rewards may become more Magnificent. On both Hands is great *Gain*; unless the *Gain* seems small, when one that has a deadly Disease swallows
bitter

Preparative to Death. 47

Bitter Pills, and with a Light and Temporary Trouble, both Shuns the Danger of *Death*, and Enjoys the perpetual *Sweetness of Health*; or when a Soldier by one Hour's Engagement, Purchases *Wealth and Honour* for all his Life after. By this means also our most *Merciful Lord* draws all Things to *himself*, if we do but fix our Eyes on the *sign* which is lifted up on high. *He* draws all our Evils to *himself*, and turns them into our Gain and *his* own Glory, which *he* communicates to us who are planted in *him* by *Faith*. But what Advantage do they get who turn away from *God* in time of *Affliction*, and murmur and repine against *him*? what but this? that *Grief*, which of necessity must be born, they double and render ten times heavier to themselves, and by their ill taking that Remedy which should have wrought their Cure, they turn it into a deadly Poyson. This verily, is Sublime and Powerful Philosophy, and such

48 *The Devout Christian's*

such a *Meditation of Death*, as who
soever shall duly examine him
self in, while he is well and sound
will never be surpriz'd at the
Suddenness of its coming. From
what hath been said we may ob
serve that there is a Four-fold
Death.

A Death { *Natural,*
Spiritual,
Transformatory,
Eternal.

1. The *Death Natural*, is a Se
paration of the Soul from the
Body.

2. The *Death Spiritual*, is a Se
paration of God from the Soul;
for as the Soul is the Life of the
Body, so God is the Life of the
Soul. From this the *Natural Death*
took its rise, as to the necessity of
it, according to the pious Opini
ons of the Ancient Divines. From
both is derived the *Death of Hell*,
if the *Death Spiritual* and *Natural*
come together. For after the *Death*
of the Body, there is no room for
Repentance. There is yet still a
nother

Preparative to Death. 49

another *Death*, by which we are transformed from the Image of the *Old Adam* into the Image of the new, which is *Christ* our Lord. This is the Separation of the Flesh from the Spirit. Nor is this a light Combat, for there is no Hope of Victory, unless the Spirit of *Christ* helps the Infirmitie of our Flesh. But his Grace killeth the old Man in us, that now we may not be led by our own Spirit, but by the Spirit of God, and that we our selves might not live, but that *Christ* might live in us. This most blessed *Death*, whether it hath happen'd to any one compleatly in this Life, I cannot tell, yet the Lord of his infinite Mercy, is pleased to supply of himself the Defects of our Insufficiency. This *Death* is earnestly to be sought after, and to be duly meditated on all our Life long, as St. Paul writes to the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 4. 10. Always bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord *Jesus*, that the Life al-

50 *The Devout Christian's*

so of Jesus might be made manifest in our Body. To the same end he exhorts the Colossians, Chap. 3. Mortifie your Members which are upon Earth. He doth not command them to pluck out their Eyes, or to chop off their Hands, or to sever any of their Members from their Body. What Members do he mean then that they must mortify? why he tells them, Fornication, Uncleanness, inordinate Affection, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness which is Idolatry. The common sort of People lament the Dead, but St. Paul congratulates this Death, to the Colossians. Ye are Dead, saith he, and your Life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 3. This Death is the Mother of Spiritual Life, as Sin is the Father of Spiritual Death, and even of Hell. But in the several sorts of Death very many behave themselves oddly. How strangely do we tremble at the remembrance of the Death of the Body? the Ancients for that very reason hated

Cypress

Preparative to Death. 51

Cypress, because it was used at Funerals; and *Smallage*, because the Graves were strew'd with it. Nay, to this Day there are some that will curse and swear horribly at the smell of *Frankincense*, because (as I conjecture) Funeral Scents were made with it. But the *Death* *spiritual* is much more to be feared than a Thousand *Deaths* of the Body, and yet we freely and cheerfully hasten on to this, glorying when we have done Evil, and boasting of the most abominable Actions. We are even out of our Wits, when a Danger is at hand, lest the Soul should bid adieu to this miserable Body, tho' we are to live more happily without its Imprisonment; how much rather ought we to tremble for fear, as oft as we are in Danger, lest God, our Eternal Life, should forsake our Souls? We call that House where there is a dead Corps an unlucky House, and we pass by it with our Nostrils stop'd. But the *wise Man* concludes it far

52 *The Devout Christian's*

better to go to the House of Mourning, than to go to the House of Feasting, Eccles. 7. 2. In the House of Mourning we are naturally Sorrowful.

But this Sorrow, because it is according to the Will of God, worketh in us a sure Salvation whilst it reminds us of our last End, and calls and excites us to a true and unfeigned Repentance; and will not suffer us to continue any ways in a course of Sin. These are happy Mourners indeed, who do so bewail the Temporal Death of another, as to begin to lament their own Condition, who are dying a more grievous Death.

Therefore whether had you rather swallow down, a bitter Potion, that for one Hour's Pain you may enjoy everlasting Health; or at a Feast, drink sweet Wine mixed with Poyson, which, with its transient Pleasantness, will bring a cursed Death?

But these Things are so little regarded by many, that Drunken

Preparative to Death. 53

ds sing in Brothel-Houses ; and
ey that have raised their Estates,
d improved them by Fraud
d Cozenage applaud them-
ves ; and those who are advan-
d to Honour by wicked Pra-
ices do Triumph.

Do not the meaner sort of Men
all wallowing in sensual Lusts
and Pleasures, to live ? but they
at live at that mad rate are ra-
ther twice dead. First, because
they are forsaken of the *Holy Spi-*
rit of God. And 2^{dy}, because
they are now already the Chil-
ren of Hell. For as the Life of
good Men is hid in God, being to
appear also with *Christ*. So is the
Death of *Hell* secretly wrapt up
in and carried about by those,
who obey the Lusts of the Flesh,
and shall openly appear in the
Day of Judgment. 'Tis Hope a-
lone which separates a Sinner e-
ven in this Life from *Hell-Fire*.
For as long as a Man Hopes there
is a Prospect of Pardon and For-
giveness.

54 *The Devout Christian's*

But it will be our best way to take diligent heed that that Hope, which hath not its Rise from Faith and Charity, do not deceive us at last; lest we thus flatter our selves (as the manner of some is) Oh! I am Young, I will live now and enjoy the Pleasures of the World, when I grow Old, it is time enough to be Religious and turn Saint. But alas! thou such a one, who hath promised thee old Age? A second says; while I am in my Prime I'll Eat and Indulge my greedy Appetite; when I marry a Wife, then I will begin to live frugally.

But, O self Flatterer! how knowest thou that thou shalt live until to Morrow? and perhaps a third may flatter himself with such Thoughts as these: At one time or other I shall retire, and then bewail my ill spent Life, in the mean time I will Enjoy the World.

But who hath promised you that you shall repent, supposing you

Preparative to Death. 55

you may live long enough? Is Repentance in a Man's own Power? 'tis only the Grace of *Christ* that must bring a Sinner to a good Mind, and a right Understanding. And *he* bestows that freely on whom and when he pleases. To be sure, what belongs to a Sinner is even now in *Hell*. Is it not then prodigious Blindness and Folly for a Man who is in such an horrible State, to set himself a certain Day to repent in; who, if he should fall into a Well, or be cast into a Prison, all the Haste of those that run to pull him out, would seem meer Slowness? Out of a Well he would immediately call for the help of a Man; and being beset with so many Evils, doth not he forthwith implore God's Assistance, who alone raiseth up the Dead? Whosoever therefore in this Life diligently meditates on the *Death Transformatory*, and greatly Fears the *Death Spiritual*, and that of *Hell*, he shall in no

56 *The Devout Christian's*

wise fear the Approaches of the
natural *Death*, which doth not
sever him from *God*, but joy
him nearer to *God*, and at once
puts an end to all Afflictions
which this Life is every where
cumbred with, and Translates
to Everlasting Rest and Happi-
ness.

You say it Translates into Re-
and Happiness ; but only the
Souls of the Righteous. True
indeed, for the *Death* of the Wicked
is the worst thing that can be-
fall them.

Therefore as long as thou live-
st, and art in good Health, en-
deavour to be in the Number
of the Righteous. Now he
Righteous, who from his Heart
Acknowledges and Coudemns his
own Unrighteousness, and being
terrified with the Thoughts of
Hell, flies to the Sanctuary of
God's Mercy, and to the effectual
Remedy of Repentance.

But they who live all their
Life-long, just as if they were
fun

of them are never to die, and indulge their
 th no lusts, not regarding the sacred
 joy Word of God so often and kindly
 t on inviting them to Repentance; are
 ction more deaf (as they say) than the To-
 when mean Shore. What wonder if such
 ates as these are surprized at *Death's*
 Happ sudden Call? when they have to
 deal with a Disease which will
 to Re suffer nothing else to be tended,
 ly th with Physicians or Heirs, with
 Tru legates or Expectants, with
 Wick Creditors or Debtors, with Wife
 an bo or Children. with Stewards or
 servants, with Friends or Ene-
 ou liv nies, with Funeral or Burial Ex-
 h, en pences. And moreover with the
 umbe World, which because he hath
 he loved too much, he leaves fore
 Hear gainst his Will. Besides, he hath
 nns hi to deal with the *Death* of the Bo-
 being y, for which he is not duly pre-
 hts o pared. And last of all with Sa-
 ary o an, who then attacks him with
 lectua ll his Forces; with *Hell*, which
 then appears in the most dismal
 thei shape, and in all its Terror. But
 wen that moment of time will not be
 sur

58 *The Devout Christian's*

sufficient for such a Multitude of Business; surely therefore Men should take great care beforehand, that they come well provided to the last and sharpest Combat. Some perhaps may ask how this may be done? Let them hear the Preacher, who saith, Remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth before the evil Days come, Eccles. 12. 1. And let us Harken to the Son of Sirach, before Judgment examine thy self, and in the Day of Visitation thou shalt find Mercy. Humble thy self before thou art Sick, and in the time of Sicknes shew Repentance, Ecclus. 18. v. 20, 21. Good Advice! tho' we did all know the Day of our Death. But since we do not, we have so much the more Reason to follow it, for we ought to think every Day our last because we know not whether we shall live till another. While we live, and are in good Health let us shake off trifling Business as much as we can; and before Disease confines us to our Bed

Preparative to Death. 59

Let us set our Houses in Order. The first thing we have to do, is to remember our *Creator*, that by a sincere Confession and Repentance we may be restored to *his* favour, then let us Examine our Conscience, abandoning whatever we find displeasing to *God*; that when a Disease shall force us before *his* Tribunal, we may find a Propitiation. They who in Prosperity set up stiff Necks against *God*, are they not strangely cast down, if a sudden Disease threatens them with *Death*? But how much more acceptable is it to *God* if we do that voluntarily of our own accord, to which Sickness forces us at last? Let us prosecute our selves then, with the *Publican* and the *Sinful Woman* in the Gospel, before *God*, appeasing *his* Wrath with Tears and Alms-Deeds, Prayers, and other Godly Acts, and by so doing, in time of Sickness, such shall be our *Death* as our Life hath been. Some are against making a Will, as if there

60 *The Devout Christian's*

were some unlucky Omen in it. This is the Weakness of our Flesh. But, O Good Man! You will die never the sooner for your Will being made, but more quietly. It is the Duty of those, who have Children, or Brethren, or other lawful Heirs, to take Care that no Contention arise between Brethren and Kindred. As for those who have no Heirs to their Estates, they are obliged to make a Will for preventing the occasion of Contention and Law Suits to Posterity. In a Word, all Men in Health ought so to settle their Affairs, that in Sicknes they may be free from the unseasonable trouble of them. Furthermore, if any are disturbed with doubtful Cases by Scruples, either concerning Marrimony, Excommunication, Prayers, Restitutions, and Reconciliations: Let them disclose them when they are well, and not reserve any intricate Matters to the last Day. They are in the right, who dying charge their

Preparative to Death. 61

their Heirs or Executors to make due Restitution of what has been gotten by Fraud; but it is the best way, and much more advisable in time of Health to do it themselves, because oftentimes their order is not executed by others. So they do well, who, when they are dying, forgive all Men their Offences, and also pray other Men they have offended to forgive them. But it is far more acceptable to God, and more safe for the quiet of their own Consciences, to do the same when they are in Health, not thro' the Fear of *Death* but Love of *Christ*. They do well, who when they die give part of their Riches for the Relief of the Poor. But their Offering would be much more acceptable, if, according to their Ability, they themselves would relieve the Necessity of their poor Neighbours, whilst they live; for the Poor do not always receive that which a dying Man hath ordered them by

62 *The Devout Christian's*

by his Will. But suppose they do receive it, it is another's then, not thine, which is given. Moreover, there are very many Diseases of that Nature, which give Men no time to dispose of their Possessions. I omit sudden and unexpected Accidents, which tho' Peradventure they do not befall every one, yet all ought to expect them, because it is possible they may happen to all, as it befall that *foolish Man* in the Gospel, who having promised *himself* a long and pleasant Life, hears this awful Summons, *Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be required of thee, Luke 12. 20.* We all pray, *From sudden and unprovided Death, Good Lord deliver us.* What is it that those Men pray to be delivered from? what, is all *sudden Death* to be detested? in no wise. *For with whatsoever Death the Righteous shall be prevented, he shall be at Rest, Wis. 4. 7.* For Death cannot be evil to those (tho' never so sudden) who have led good Lives. Rather therefore, let us
pray

Preparative to Death. 63

pray thus; *from a wicked Life, Good Lord deliver us.* For how can we call *Death* sudden, when it daily breaks in upon our Thoughts and Senses? what do we hear from our Infancy, but Groans of dying People? what do we see but Funerals, and Trains of Mourners, and Tombs having Deaths Heads upon them? and if the *Death* of other Men, who are Strangers to us, have little or no Influence upon us, how often may the *Death* of our Relatives, who are very near ally'd to us, mind us of our Mortality, and the *Death* of our dearest Friends, to whom a mutual Love and Charity hath more closely united us, than the natural Ties of the nearest Relations? and if this signifies but little, how often may we admonish our selves of our own Frailty? for who is there amongst us who hath not, at some time or other, been brought into Danger of this Life, either by Tempest, or Robbery,
or

64 *The Devout Christian's*

or War, or the fall of something, or Pestilence, or Diseases? Where-soever you turn your self *Death* lies in Ambush. Houses are a safe refuge (as one would think) but how many are killed by the fall of them? The Earth is a solid Element, yet don't it sometimes sinking swallow whole Cities? the Air it self, by which we live and breath, very often proves *Death* to us, and our very Meat and Drink.

In fine, do not Hunger and Thirst daily threaten *Death* unless you quench and satisfie them? As oft as Man is named he is warned of *Death*; for the very name of a Mortal Man testifies as much. What then do they, who pray against sudden *Death*, but accuse themselves of Carelessness? For all *Death* is sudden to the unprepared, tho' it comes to one an Hundred Years Old. But do you call that sudden, which you see presents it self continually to all your Senses, and lays fast hold on your Minds? Thus the *Flood* was sudden to un-

godly

godly
the
when
Eatin
Mar
had
com
sudd
Sodon
goin
len
repe
nah.
is an
Ven
ther
to a
nevi
is te
selv
thin
Dis
of 3
wer
are
the
Dea
by

Preparative to Death. 65

godly Men, who mock'd at Noah the Preacher of Righteousness, when he began to Build the Ark; Eating, Drinking, and giving in Marriage, as if that which God had threatned should never have come to pass. In like Manner, sudden was the Overthrow of the Sodomites, who laughed at Lot's going out. The same had befallen the Ninevites, had they not repented at the Preaching of *Jonah*. Whosoever knows that God is angry with him, must look for Vengeance every Moment, or rather make it his Principal Care to avoid it, as *David* and the *Ninevites* did. The Wrath of God is terrible, but if we betake ourselves to Repentance, he will think upon Mercy in his very Displeasure. At the Preaching of *Jonah* a Stranger, the *Ninevites* were Converted. But we who are Deaf to so many warnings of the Lord, Pray against *sudden Death*. He excites us to Industry by the Examples and Parables of

66 *The Devout Christian's*

of *Noah*, *Lot*, and of *those*, on whom the *Tower of Siloam* fell on a sudden. That we may be in a continual readines, he uses the Similitude of a *Thief* in the Night, of the *Faithful Steward*, of the *Ten Virgins*, and often cries out *Watch*, for ye know neither the *Day* nor the *Hour*, *Mat. 25. 13*. And after all this, can any *Death* be sudden to us? It is sudden indeed, but to the *Careless* (or as I may say rather) to the *Deaf*, to the *Blind*, and to the *Stupid*. Because we neither hear the *Lord* calling upon us, neither do we see what is expos'd to our View, nor feel what Urges us on every side. It is not material that our *Lord's Word* seems to speak concerning the last Day of the World, for the last Day of any ones Life is the last Day of the World to him. At the Consummation of all Things, the General Judgment shall be openly celebrated; but in the mean time every ones Soul, as soon as it hath left the Body, shall receive its Sentence, tho' wholly

Preparative to Death. 67

unknown to us. And the Lord is pleased to conceal both Days from us, in this also manifesting his most indulgent Kindness towards us. For since the Violence of rich and wicked Men is now so intolerable, what would it be, if they knew they should live longer? Again, the Infirm (as most Men are) were they sure they should live to Old Age, they would not mind living well till then. And if they were certain, that they had but a few Days to live, they would be Anxious and Melancholy, and more negligent of Promoting the Publick Good. Now the Providence of *Almighty God* hath taken a middle Course, that *Death* should be so certain to all Men, that they may know they shall die, as sure as they are born; and that neither the highest nor lowest may any ways flatter themselves with the vain Hopes of living always in this World. Again, that the Day of *Death* should be so uncertain, *God* hath

68 *The Devout Christian's*

hath not been pleased to acquaint his most dear Children with it. Whence it comes to pass that the Wicked are not so injurious to the Good, and the Good do so abstain from Sin, as if they were to dye every Day, and are so wholly bent upon good Works, as if they were to live a long time. What then do they propose to themselves who have recourse to those that are skill'd in Palmistry, Fortune-telling, Astrology, Physiognomy, Conjuring, Casting of Figures, and the Black Art, that they may know how long they have to live? The Preacher cries out, *Man knoweth not his time, as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare; so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them; Eccles 9. 12.* And would we pretend to know our End from those that know not their own? What? That which *Christ*, who is the everlasting-Truth would not have to be known,

Preparative to Death. 69

known, as not fit to be known will they know against *Christ's* Will from vain Men? What doth *Saul's* wicked Example please Christians? What did his Misdeeds avail him, but that he died twice? There are those, and yet not wicked Men, who beg of *God* a certain kind of *Death*, they pray that they may lye Sick some Months, that they may bestow just this time upon Repentance. Holy is the Request of such who wish for such a *Death*, as may not be troublesome to their Friends, for this is the result of Charity. But it is a Sign of a more stedfast Faith, to commit the kind of *Death* and the time of Visitation to *God*. He knows what is most expedient for us, and will give us what is best. *Death* appears in innumerable Shapes, and sometimes very terrible; either when it takes a Man on a sudden, which happens to some in the midst of their Jollity; or when it is attended with grievous and lasting Torments, as the

Pat-

70 *The Devout Christian's*

Palsie and *Phurisie*; or when it hath a loathsome Aspect, as in those who being choaked with *Pblegm*, turn Black; or when it deprives us of the use of the Tongue and Understanding, as an *Apoplexy*, *Pbrensie*, or some *Fevers*, and other particular Diseases, which force Men to break their Necks, to Drown, or Hang, or Stab themselves with a Sword. For there are Diseases which confound the inward Organs of the Mind, which the Vulgar sort of People call *Demoniacks*. No Man indeed is to be judged by those, for *St. Chrysostom* most lovingly Comforts one possessed with a Devil: Tho' they are those kinds of *Death*, which are in themselves manifestly Impious, and it is the Duty of good Christians to pray against and abhor them. On the other Hand, some die so pleasantly, as if they were only in a Sleep, not seeming to die. But let *Death* appear in what shape it will, none are to be judged by it. We ought not to pass Sentence rashly even

on

on t
they
Pena
happ
ous
one
for
Hea
a Fr
the
Reli
Lora
Thi
his
but
Dea
whi
Som
Gho
ged
whe
who
Dea
Hap
fessi
die,
ceiv
fam

Preparative to Death. 71

on those, who for some Offences they have committed, suffer the Penalties of the Laws, altho' they happen to undergo an Ignominious *Death*. For it is possible for one that is cut into four Quarters for raising a Sedition, to go to Heaven, when another dying in a *Franciscan Habit* (according to the Popish Method) and buried Religiously may go to Hell. The Lord alone is to Judge of these Things; God Exercises and Tries his own People different Ways, but (as I have already hinted) no *Death* ought to be accounted evil, which follows an holy Life. Sometimes they who yield up the Ghost most pleasingly, are plunged into everlasting Torments; when on the other Hand, they who suffer a cruel and painful *Death*, are translated into Rest and Happiness; some desire full Confession of their Sins before they die, and are very earnest to receive the Sacrament, with the same ill purpose as those, who in former

former times put off Baptism till the last Day of their Life! And sent not for the Priest to baptize them, till the Physicians had declared 'em past cure. Why do we desire that should happen but once, which ought and may be done daily? * For every ones best way is carefully to Examine his one Conscience before he goes to Sleep, and if he find himself guilty of any Fault that Day, to smite himself on the Breast; and beg Pardon of God with Tears and having implored the Divine Assistance, to purpose to lead a new Life. Neither can any one excuse himself by saying he hath too much Business, and is not at leisure. A quarter of an Hour is sufficient for this Important Business. 'Twill not take up much time to say, *Lord be Merciful to me a Sinner*. And this is enough, provided it be said with an unfeigned and sincere Heart.

* Omit not to read the Daily Self-Examinant, &c.

Preparative to Death. 73

No Man that goes to Sleep is
And sure that he shall awake again in
this World. How dangerous a
Thing is it then to fall asleep in
that Condition, in which if *Death*,
who is the Sister of Sleep, sur-
prizes us, and the Sister takes a-
way the Brother, we are Ever-
lastingly undone? so great Dan-
ger may be avoided with a little
Consideration. To do this daily
with God, and when the uneasi-
ness and clamour of Conscience
requires, with our Minister the
Divine Ambassador of God, (*viz.*) to
cleanse our Conscience, by a sin-
cere Confession, will be great Sa-
tisfaction to us, and will diminish
that great Anxiety which Con-
fession is often the cause of, upon
our *Death Bed*.

Moreover, because at the point
of Departure, the Contemplation
of the *Lord's Death*, and of the
whole Communion of the Church
which is the *Lord's Body*, is an

Extraordinary Comfort; it will
be of great Advantage to be ex-

exercised

74 *The Devout Christian's*

exercised herein all our Life ; that this Action by frequent Repetition, may pass into a Custom, from a Custom into a Habit, and from Habit into Nature. Thus it will be, if, our Consciences being cleansed from all Desire of Sinning, we often receive the Mystical Bread, and drink of the Mystical Cup. For this Sacrament recommends two Things to us, the tender Love of the *Head* towards its Members, and the united Fellowship of the Members amongst themselves. Wharsoever Good there is in the Body flows from *Christ* the Head, and is common to all the Members : as in the Bodies of living Creatures, tho' the Members be different and subservient to diverse Uses, yet the Life proceeding from the *Head* is the very same throughout all the Members, by so indissoluble a Connexion, that as *St. Paul* Teaches us, *Whether one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it ; or one Member be*

honoured

Preparative to Death. 75

honoured, all the Members rejoyce with it, 1 Cor. 12. 26. This is expressed in the *Apostles Creed* by the *Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints*. For Grace is no more abridged in the Mystical Body of *Christ*, than Nature in the Body of an Animal.

Let none therefore despair if a Member be Sick and Infirm, seeing that he hath an Omnipotent Head; neither let him think himself forsaken, who is comforted and supported by the Merits and Intercession of *Christ Jesus*.

The more any one is exercised in the Contemplation of these Things in his Life-time, the more Comfort will he receive by them at his *Death*; for then they will come of their own accord, as the Soul's Intimate Friend and Acquaintance. Therefore in my Opinion, it was a very Religious design of those who digested the History of our *Lord's Death* into certain Hours, that Children might be used to repeat some part

76 *The Devout Christian's*

of it every Day with a thankful Heart.

By these means we may be well secured against the Surprize of *Death*. Our dear Children are to be parted with, our beloved Wives, our loving Friends, our well manur'd Fields, our stately Buildings, abundance of Riches are to be left behind us.

But the Christian Soldier hath premeditated how to take his leave of these things, whose Soul is always upon the watch in the Garrison of the Body, every moment expecting the Trumpet of the General, which may give the Alarm to commence Battel, always in a readiness at the Summons. *Set thy House in Order, for thou shalt die, and not live, 2 Kings 20. 1.* He looks upon his Body, not as his House, but as a Tabernacle, neither doth he lay up his Treasure there, but what is sufficient for a Day's Journey he carries in his Purse, watching Day and Night, having the Weapons
always

Preparative to Death. 77

always prepared against the sudden Assaults of his Enemies. Neither doth he stick at any difficulty, so he may but please his General, under whom he hath listed himself. A Man's Life (saith Blessed Job) is a Warfare upon Earth. Job 7. 1. The Son of Sirach exhorts Young Beginners in this Warfare, *My Son if thou come to serve the Lord, stand in Righteousness and Fear, prepare thy Soul for Temptation, Eccclus. 2. 1.*

The Service of God is an open Profession of the Christian Warfare. 'Tis the Duty of a Soldier, who is ready for Battel, to stand Arm'd in his Station. Stand fast in Righteousness, not in Pride which boasteth it self against God, but in Equity. They lie down and Sleep, who are of this World's Party. But the Christian Soldier stands prepared for all good Works; the best of Works is to *die well in the Lord.* For a Pure and Innocent Life gives much

78 *The Devout Christian's*

Courage and Confidence against the Devil.

Faith will never yield to the Enemy, *Hope* never suffer it self to be cast away, *Charity* Affords Provision to him that standeth. But if a Courageous Spirit is an infallible Consequence of an holy Life, why doth *the Wise Man* say also *in Fear*? If you are Righteous, what do you Fear? If you are not, how is it that you stand? This fear is not the Author of Despair according to *Solomon*. That fear casts down a Sluggard, and is cast out it self by Charity. But this is the best Preserver of Innocency, the Religious Fear of Children endures for evermore, *he that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall*, saith the Holy Apostle, 1 Cor. 10. 12. And again, *thou standest by Faith, be not high-minded, but fear*, Rom. 10. 20. There is a holy Fear of the Lord, that spurs on to good Works and deters us from bad ones; and there is a Wicked Slavish Fear, that

that prompts us to Sloth and Idleness. *I was afraid* (saith he) *and went and hid thy Talent in the Earth, Mat. 25. 25.* But Fear, the Companion of Righteousness, makes us distrust our own Strength, and labour more chearfully with the Aids of the Spirit, and keep the Gifts of God with greater Care and Circumspection.

Furthermore, the Righteousness of Men, tho' never so perfect, trembles and shakes when called to the Tribunal of Divine Justice, *In whose sight the Stars are not pure, and Iniquity is found in the very Angels, Job 25. 5.* What shall not we poor helpless Wretches, who dwell in Houses of Clay, fear this Judgment? when Job being try'd of God, saith, *I was afraid of all my Sorrows, knowing that thou wouldst not hold me Innocent. If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my Hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own*

80 *The Devout Christian's*

Cloaths shall abhor me, Chap. 9 v. 28, 30, 31. And St. Paul, a more expert Soldier than Job, says, I know nothing by my self, yet am not hereby justified, 1 Cor. 4. 4. It follows, And prepare thy Soul for Temptation. There are divers kinds of Temptations, which God Exercises his Soldiers with, but Death is the worst of all. For then we must grapple with our Enemies Hand to Hand, neither is there any light skirmishing, but we must fight it out with all our Strength.

For this Combat the Mind is always to be prepared, for what will become of a Soldier here, that is not skill'd in War, that never fought with an Enemy? that never experienced the Courage, Subtilty, or Deceit of another, and that never knew his own Strength? to wage War with a known Enemy, conduces much to the Victory; so that most valiant Soldier, or rather General, St. Paul saith, Lest Satan should get an

Ad-

Preparative to Death. 81

Advantage of us, for we are not ignorant of his Devices, 2 Cor. 2. 11.

What wonder is it if he was acquainted with all his crafty Wili-ness, who so often waged War with him, and had been in all kind of Dangers? Then is the Fire applied, which will manifest what every ones Deeds are, and upon what Foundation they are built.

We may observe, That sometimes to happen in the Spiritual Warfare, which is very common in the Carnal one; they who seem'd most fearful in the Camp, and changed their Countenance at the Sound of the Trumpet, are most bold in an Engagement. Again, they who pretended to be as bold, and as fierce as Lions, while there was no pressing Danger, are greatest Cowards when they come to fight.

In like manner there are some, who, when they are in Health, boast of the Peace and Quiet of their Consciences, that they are

82 *The Devout Christian's*

fit to die, and desirous of leaving this troublesome World, depending on I know not what Assurance that *Christ* hath promised us Life and hath suffered Punishment for our Sins; denying that there is any regard to be had whether our Works be good or bad. But that this one thing is enough, if we only believe we shall be eternally happy.

But I am afraid, that many of those who in Health boast of their Security, tremble very much when *Death* approaches, and that Day is at Hand wherein the Business is done not in Words, but in Truth: They aggravate the Crime of not believing God's Promises, but no People are more terrified at *Death*, than those who firmly believe them. But he who believes not that *Hell* is prepared for those that live wickedly, but that *Death*, together with the Destruction of the whole Mankind puts an end to all Evils, hath less Dread of *Death*.

There

Preparative to Death. 83

Therefore Faith begets in God-
Men, a Fear of God, *which is*
the beginning of Wisdom, as blessed
Job testifies, *The Fear of the Lord*
Wisdom, and to depart from Evil
Understanding, Job 28. 28. To
the same Purpose saith Isaiah, *By*
thy fear, O Lord, we have conceived,
and as it were brought forth, and
we have born the Spirit of Salvation.
In the third Chapter of St. Luke,
we read that the People being af-
frighted at the Preaching of John
Baptist, who invited them to Re-
pentance, saying, *now the Ax is*
laid unto the Root of the Tree, cry'd,
What shall we do? But had they
not believed John they would not
have asked that Question. So in
the second Chapter of the Acts of
the Apostles, the Multitude being
astonished at the Preaching of
St. Peter, and having conceived
Fear by their Faith, *being prickt*
in their Hearts, said unto Peter,
and the rest of the Apostles, Men
and Brethren, what shall we do?
v. 37. which they would never

84 *The Devout Christian's*

have said, had not Faith pricked their Consciences with the Fear of Hell.

This Fear, even in a Man that leads a good Life, does not proceed from any Mistrust of God's Promise, nor from a Disbelief of the Articles of the Christian Faith, nor from the doubting of the Efficacy of the Sacraments obtain'd by the Death of *Christ*: * but it springs from the Consciousness of our own Infirmities, which are greater than we are able perfectly to apprehend.

But we are not obliged to be secure in Particulars, tho' we despair of none. As it is requisite to be believed that whosoever receives the Sacrament of Baptism with Faith, receives also a gracious

* *As you may farther see in the Companion to the Altar, shewing the Nature and Necessity of a Sacramental Preparation, about Fears and Scruples, &c. Printed for Edmund Parker in Lombard-Street.*

Preparative to Death. 85

ous Remission of all Sins ; but it is not necessary to believe that when this Man is baptized, he is free from Sinning, for it is possible there may be some particular Impediment in this Man, which hinders the universal Efficacy of the Sacrament.

The like may be said of the Sacrament of *Christ's* Body and Blood. It is a wicked thing to doubt whether he, who hath received this Sacrament rightly as he ought to do, be free from Sin ; yet 'tis not Heretical to doubt whether this or that Man be absolutely free, because none of us can tell what particular Impediments there might be. I except evident and singular Revelation to particular Persons, where the exprefs Doctrine of Scripture compels me to the contrary.

This doubting is not want of Faith, but Religious Modesty, entirely submitting it self wholly to God's Divine Pleasure, tho' he should condemn a Man *be* shall
not

86 *The Devout Christian's*

not be conderaned for this Reason, but for his humble Submission he shall have Forgiveness of his Offences, if his Faith fully depends on the Mercy of *Christ*, and is accompanied with religious Fear.

In like manner we necessarily believe that Men, thro' Faith and Love towards our *Lord Jesus*, obtain Salvation. But yet we may doubt whether this or that Man be in that State. Nevertheless we are not to judge rashly of others for the worse: But our Hope ought to grow strong with the Increase of Faith and Charity. The same is to be said of Promises and Threatnings in Holy Scripture; For the cause of doubting hath not its Original from *God* who cannot lye, but from us. Man is not Ignorant what excellent good Things *God* hath Promised, but yet, to those only that Fear and Love him. But is there any one amongst us, that hath performed due Reverence,

rence,
Love,
doubt
Prom
we ar
Fa
are th
there
Faith
be o
rend
and
towa
lasti
In
hath
once
rece
of
wh
him
ma
Re
for
wi
ry
he
all

Preparative to Death. 87

rence, as to such a *Lord*; due Love, as to such a Parent? The doubt is not then, whether *God's* Promises are true, but whether we are worthy of the Promises.

Faith, Hope, Charity and Fear, are the Gifts of the Spirit. Who therefore knows whether the Faith and Charity which he hath, be of that kind of Gifts which render us acceptable unto *God*, and whether they be sufficient towards the attainment of everlasting Salvation?

In like manner *God* by his *Son* hath promised Pardon of all Sin once by *Baptism*, if it be rightly received; and yet is there none of us who hath not defiled the white Garment, which was given him *gratis* in his *Baptism*, with many spots. There is a present Remedy of Repentance, but only for those that turn unto the *Lord* with all their Heart. Now let every one examine himself, whether he hath turned unto the *Lord* with all his Heart? whether he hath

88 *The Devout Christian's*

a truly broken and a contrite Heart? if he hath, whether in a sufficient measure. The Baptist cries out, *bring forth Fruits Meet for Repentance, Mat. 3. 8.*

Who dares say that he hates and abhors all Sin as he ought to do? God threatens Vengeance and Hell-fire to those that break his Commandments, and how often have we without all Fear broken them? How many may you find who do more regard the Indignation of an angry Prince or mortal Judge than that of the *Living God*? And how often comes it to pass that Men Love one another better than *Almighty God*, suffering that for a mortal Friend, which they would not suffer for the sake of *God*? Truly I am of Opinion that the Faith of good Men is always accompanied with Religious Fear, excepting some, whom *God* is pleased to have eminently good, as Examples to excite others to Virtue; but few there be that follow them. They have

Preparative to Death. 89

have better Grounds to hope for the Lord's Mercy who tremble at his Justice.

Therefore they that say *Believe that thou shalt be saved, and thou shalt be saved*, are in a double mistake: For if they speak of any kind of Faith, what they say is false; but if of a lively Faith, it is spoken very foolishly: Believe, just as if it was in any ones Power to believe when they please; I Question whether we can be certain that we have the gift of Faith in us. What? That Man is not only unknown to other Men, but even to himself, when nothing tho' never so secret can blind the Eyes of God? The Heart of Man is by us unsearchable, but no Secret of the Heart is unknown to him that made it. That oftentimes which seems good in our Eyes is Evil in the sight of God, and that is pure with us which is impure with him.

So

So it happens that a Man may conclude himself free from Sin when he, without knowing it, may have a wounded Conscience. Why may not this be, when the famous *Psalmist* cries out, *Who can understand his Offences! cleanse thou me from my secret Faults, Psalm 16. 12.* Therefore it is our safest refuge to flee with awful Reverence from *God's Justice* to his *Mercy*, and to say with the inspired *Psalmist*, *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight shall no Man living be justified, Psalm 143. 2.* None could be able to stand in this Judgment were our Deserts weighed in a just balance, were not *Mercy* to Triumph over Judgment. To this purpose the *Psalmist* says immediately before in the same Psalm, *Hear me, O Lord, in thy faithfulness, and answer me in thy righteousness, v. 1.* Whosoever desires to be heard, lays aside all Contention, and he who supplicates to be heard in the Truth of

God

Preparative to Death. 91

may God, distrusts his own Veracity ;
Sins knowing that *God is true, and e-*
very Man a Liar : and he that
Prays to be heard in the Righte-
ousness of God, wholly mistrusts
his own Righteousness. But the
Faithfulness and Righteousness of
God is Christ the Minister of the
Gospel of Grace. For by Moses
was a Law given which manifest-
ed our Unrighteousness, but Grace
came by Jesus Christ, who hath
imparted his Righteousness unto
us.

We lye unto God, as oft as we
break his Laws, to which we
Swear at the Laver of Regenera-
tion, as oft as we do not duly
perform our Oaths and Promises
to our Maker and Redeemer, we
are unjust, nay we openly deny
him, as often as we swerve or run
back from the Covenant. But
who' we Unfaithful Wretches may
deny him, he is as good as his
Word to us, he cannot deny him-
self, being always true to his Pro-
mises, that he may be justified in
his

92 *The Devout Christian's*
his saying, and clear when he
Judged, Psal. 51. 4.

Therefore the *Father* hears
in *his Faithfulness* in which
hath promised Remission of Sin
by *his Son*; but he heareth us not
in our Righteousness, but in
own. For by *his Son* he justifieth
every one that believes, *Purifying*
our Hearts by Faith, Acts 15.
Blessed are they that *serve the Lord*
with Fear, and rejoyce with Trembling,
Psal. 2. 11. What! shall
not Sinful Men Fear him, who
the very Angels tremble at?
is good to Fear before Judgment
that we may find Mercy in time
of Judgment.

From human History we learn
with what Gladness *St. Andrew*
went to the Cross. But on the
other Hand, we know a great many
good Men have been disturbed
with strange Fears a little before
Death, dreading the Judgment
of *God*, and Condemning
their past ill spent Life.

'T

Preparative to Death. 93

'Tis storied of a certain Man,
who being afraid to Die, his Bre-
thren, which were present, said
why art thou so sore afraid, since
thou hast always led a Godly
life? He reply'd, O Brethren!
The Judgments of God are one
thing, the Judgment of Men ano-
ther. *St. Bennet*, *St. Bernard* and
St. Austin, are reported to have
said the same. *Faith* makes us
tremble, and enables us to over-
come our *Fear*: We tremble
when we consider the Majesty of
that God, whom we have offend-
ed; and we cease to Fear, when
we consider the Love of *Jesus*
Christ, which cleanseth us from
all Sin, and his Grace, which sup-
plieth all our Imperfections. But
it is no certain Token of *Faith*
and *Courage* not to Fear *Death*;
or sometimes it is a Sign of A-
stonishment, nay, Madness, some-
times of a fierce Disposition: So
to tremble at *Death's* Approach,
is not always an Evidence of De-
spair, or a Guilty Conscience.

Some-

Sometimes it is meer Natural Affection, which in different Bodies is more moderate in some, and more violent in others. So Hezekiah, a Man who walked before the Lord in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, was afraid of Death, but not so as to murmur against God, but he prayed unto the Lord and wept sore; his Prayer was heard, his Tears were seen; Isa. 38. 2, 3, 5. I have known some Gentlewomen, who would tremble at the bare Name of Death, yet nothing could be more Courageous or Constant than they, when they come to die. That Fear did not proceed from an Evil Conscience, but from a peculiar Infirmary of their Sex or Nature. And those Natural Infirmities, if they be overcome by Virtue, increase the Victory, but do not argue Despair.

In like manner you may discern some Natures called in the Greek (*φιλαυλα*) self-lovers, which satisfy themselves easily in any matter. Again, there are some

over

Preparative to Death. 95

1 Af- ver curious ones, which can ne-
dies er please or satisfie themselves,
and no' they have done every thing
He- very well; and if you administer
efore to them all the Comfort imagi-
per- able, yet they feel Remorse of
eath Conscience, always soliciting
ainst them to Despair. And hence
Lord they conjecture, that God is al-
eard ways angry with them, because
3, 5 they never enjoy Peace of Con-
men science.

bare But if we distinguish Nature
ould from Virtue, they will little cre-
stant dit their Peace who please them-
e ro selves any way whatever, neither
ceed will they forthwith cast away
but their Hopes, who have a mind
their perpetually inciting them to De-
Na- spair; That is the peculiar fault
ver- of Nature, not of the Will, which
e Vi is to be despised, if it cannot be
air. overcome, and what the Spirit
dis- tells us is to be esteemed certain
the Truth, though the Flesh contra-
hich dicts it never so much.

And

And I likewise call that a fault of Nature, that Men, when their last Day is at Hand, are changed so Strangely, that they approve none of those Things which they have done in their Life-time, not because they are wicked, but because they are humane and imperfect. Tho' we are to fight with the Strength of the Spirit against these Affections of Nature, yet we must take heed that we neither judge our selves nor others by them.

Therefore let us return to what we proposed, namely, to shew by what means those weak Men may be comforted; and there are very many such, whom near approaching *Death* surprizes, in whose Lives there has been much Forgetfulness, much Negligence, much Loitering, and more Evil than good Deeds; in fine, if there hath been any good Deeds at all, they are corrupted with much Filth, so that to bring such Things into God's Presence, can

nothing else but to provoke
him.

The Mind is not at all dispo-
sed to die, or else lightly prepa-
red. What can be done for such
one at the point of *Death*? no
Man ought to despair of his Sal-
vation whilst he is alive; the
worst and last Danger is at Hand,
the time is short, we have need
of the best Advice. What shall
we do to give ease and quiet to
his Mind?

First of all, if he hath lawful
Heirs, let him remit to them all
the Care of his temporal Affairs
by his Will: This in the first
place saves time. Otherwise it
would be advisable to dispatch all
Codicils, or if any better me-
thod can be found; let him spee-
dily make an end of this Business.
This being done, let him remove
Persons from him that make
bustle about this World's Con-
cerns, for which a great many are
highly to blame, who start some
couples or other to a Man just a
dying,

98 *The Devout Christian's*

dying, either about his Will or want
some Foreign Matters. Some thro'
times they compel a dying Man, to
to subscribe, tho' he is loth and
utterly against it, and blame Man,
them for their Importunity; thro' and a
whose means he can scarce have and v
liberty to die. What can be more Conte
provoking than such Friends does
these?

Furthermore, if the Sickness because
Disease will give leave, let him by dist
endeavour to heal his Soul before charist
his Body, by a short but duly si it is co
cere and unfeigned Confession to hear
let him receive with stedfa ed like
Faith and Veneration the Absolu his Sin
tion from God's Ministers, let him ment.
beg earnestly the Mercy of God 'Tis
and purpose stedfastly. to li good C
more Religiously if he Recover may ne
but if he cannot find a Priest, ment, f
ought not to be afraid and to our
spair, as some superstitious P Faith;
sons are wont. But to conf should
his Sins unto God, who will Righte
cept of his good Will, and by ple. B
extraordinary Mercy, supply Christia
W

want of the *Sacrament* : For tho' thro' him the Sacraments are efficacious, yet without them God provides for the Salvation of Man, in case he have true Faith, and a good Will to receive them, and when it is not either thro' Contempt or Neglect, that he does not receive them.

I thought fit to say thus much, because some People are strangely disturbed for want of the *Eucharist* and *Priestly Absolution*. And it is common, on the other Hand, to hear People say, such a one died like a Christian, he confessed his Sins, and received the *Sacrament*.

'Tis indeed the Duty of every good Christian to wish that he may never want the *Blessed Sacrament*, for it yields great Comfort to our Minds, and helps our Faith ; and a sincere Christian should abound in all manner of Righteousness as much as possible. But still it better becomes Christians, to desire the Graces of

100 *The Devout Christian's*

Faith and Charity; for without these the *Sacrament* and the *Ab-
solution* will be to no purpose. We ought not to judge of any by these External Acts, unless we are assured that they disregard them through Contempt, or through Negligence, which is much the same. I am fully persuaded, that many, who have had no *Ab-
solution* from a *Priest*, neither have receiv'd the *Sacrament*, nor have been buried according to the order of the *Church*, go to *Heaven*, when others that have had all their Ceremonies solemnly performed, and are buried in the *Church*, nay, just by the *Altar*, go to *Hell*: As for Instance, those who have died by Shipwrack, or Hanging, or some other unhappy Diseases or Accident. Such Men ought to be persuaded that they are as much absolved as if they had Confess'd to a *Priest*, and that they shall receive the same Spiritual Grace as if they had received the *Sacrament*, only

Preparative to Death. 101

as I said before, they must have an earnest Faith, and a ready Will.

But suppose there be a *Priest* at Hand, and the violence of the Disease will not admit of an entire Confession, which requires a long time. Let him confess meekly, and humbly own himself to be a great Sinner, and earnestly desire the *Priestly Absolution*, and let him unfeignedly believe that he is Absolved. As oft as Necessity disappoints our Desires, God of his infinite Goodness and Mercy accepts them. Therefore they who torment a Man in this Condition, with General Confession, or with repeating his Confession with a solicitous Examination of the Circumstances, with an Enumeration of his several Offences; whether or no they do well, let them Judge. In my Opinion they act Indiscretely, and much out of Season. One short Confession of our Offences, provided it be Sincere, is enough;

or if an expresse Confession can't be had, the earnest Desire of it will do.

Besides, if he hath been offended by any one, let him exclude all Thoughts of Revenge from his Mind. If he that hath done the Injury be unworthy of Pardon, *Christ* is worthy, for whose sake let all desire of Revenge be wholly laid aside. Let him not therefore consider how grievously he hath been offended by this or that Man, but how many Offences he must beg to be forgiven of *God* himself. If he hath done Injury to any one, let it be his utmost Care to be reconciled to him. If he will not forgive and be reconciled to him, let him wish him a better Mind and *God* will excuse him, because he hath done all he could. In good Works are required of us none is more effectual to obtain Mercy of *God*, than for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, and according to his Example (who hanging upon

he Cross, prayed for those that were his Executioners, and for those that reviled him, with revilings more grievous than the Death of the Cross) freely pardon and forgive whatever Injuries Men have done us. And I can hardly tell whether any Work is more difficult, and therefore we thought the more earnestly to beg it of God. But yet thus far the Disease it self is Advantageous to this Purpose, that it breaks the Heat of Men's Passion; and makes them readier to pardon.

And there is need of the good Offices of those who visit the Sick Person, to persuade him to shake off the common Opinion of a great many, who conclude that *Confession* and the *Eucharist* hasten a Man's *Death*. They should rather persuade them that there is great Hope (as indeed there is) of recovering his Health by these Works, rather than by any other; because the Indisposition of the Mind doubles

the Force of the Disease, and oftentimes the Illness of the Body proceeds from that of the Mind, and then another thing is, God will sooner hear the Prayers of those, that supplicate for one who has made his Reconciliation with him, than for one that hath not. He is to be exhorted likewise to make use of a *Learned Priest*, who knows so to attemperate his Discourse to the Patient, that he may not either flatter him by too great Compliance, nor cast him into Despair by too great Severity; neither *break the bruised Reed*, nor *quench the smoking Flax*; *Isaiah 42. 3.* For on both Hands many err.

Neither let them rashly admit any sort of People into a Sick Man's Company, but only those by whose Conversation he may find Comfort. Those Persons are to be removed, whose Presence may renew Sinful Thoughts or Affections in the Minds of those that are Sick, as lewd Companions

ons, and idle Gamesters, or those that have been his inveterate Enemies.

Let him not despise the *Physicians* Advice, nor yet depend too much upon it. Let his chief Hope be in *God*, who as *he* alone puts the Soul into the Body, so *he* only separates them when he sees fit. Sometimes the help of a Physician is to be called in, lest we seem to tempt *God*, especially in sudden Diseases which the Physicians call acute ones. Never employ many Doctors, not only for that *Greek* Sentence that a Multitude of Generals destroy'd *Carrha*, so it often happens that a great many *Physicians* kill a Multitude of Sick Persons; but because frequently they are too officious, and whilst one persuades one thing, and another another, and every one affects to shew his Skill at the Sick Man's Peril: Medicines are heaped upon Medicines; and the Patient is not at

E 5 leisure

leisure to take due Care of his Soul's welfare.

Moreover, when there is greatest Danger the most effectual Remedies are to be apply'd, at which time some flatter Sick People with the Hopes of Life, tho' they are just a dying; and many deceive themselves, relying on common and ineffectual Remedies. The *foolish Ceremonies of Popery* as being buried in a Monk's Cowl, or the making of a Vow to God that if he recovers, he will live according to the Rules of some *particular Order*, are not to be regarded. The Sick Man is rather to be advised, that he abstain from these kind of Vows in any Disease. It is enough if he fully resolves to amend his Life when he is in good Health, and free from Fear and Trouble; then let him deliberate what course he will take. For foolish and unadvised Promises are an offence to God, and those are most assuredly so, which Fear extorts from a

astonish

astonished Mind. The Prayers of good Men will be very useful and comfortable to a Sick Person. But the most powerful Consolation in time of *Death*, is to put our whole Trust and Confidence in *Jesus Christ*, who hath given *himself* wholly for us, who is our *Advocate* with God, continually crying out, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Mat. 11. 28.* Let the Sick Man hide himself in the Holes of this Rock. Let him take refuge in *his* Wounds, and he shall be secure from *Satan*. Whensoever that subtil Serpent calls him, let him always have his Eyes upon the *Brazen Serpent* placed upon an high Tree, to the Contemplation of which *St. Paul* recals the *Galatians*, who for that reason had began to stumble, because *they had turned their Eyes away from the Crucified Jesus, Chap. 3. 1.* The venomous biting of Spirits flying in the Air shall not destroy thee, if thy Faith be kept

immovable upon that Sign of
 Everlasting Salvation. *Christ* who
 hanged upon the Cross, is our
 Triumphant Sign, a Sign of Vi-
 ctory and endless Glory. He hath
 fought for us, he hath Overcome
 for us, he hath prepared a Victo-
 ry for us, that the Eyes of our
 Faith might be intent and watch-
 ful towards *him*. In *Batteis* a-
 mongst Men, that which *Alcibiades*
 commends in *Socrates* is of
 great Consequence, never to
 wink. But in this Battel with our
 Spiritual Enemy, the whole hope
 of Victory is in our Eyes, tho
 the difference between them is
 great. There they always watch
 the Enemies Motion; here we
 are deaf and blind to the devices
 of *Satan*, having our Eyes only
 fixed upon the Sign of Grace
 and having our Ears open to our
Redeemer's Voice. *Satan* puts
 those Things into our Mind
 which aggravate the Wrath of
God. But *Christ* hanging on the
 Cross affords as an Argument of

Mercy

Mercy. *Satan's* advice certainly brings a Man to Despair, but *Christ* enlivens our Hopes. For Faith, as it hath *Eyes*, so hath it *Ears* too.

The *Holy Ghost* requires both Senses from the Soul when it saith, *Hearken, O Daughter, and consider, and incline thine Ear, Psal. 45. 10.* Hearken what thy Spouse Commands, and Consider what he promises; and if it seem to be a Fiction that so great Felicity is prepared for those that trust in the *Lord Jesus*, incline thine Ears that thou mayest believe those Things which surpass Mens Understanding, for this reason, because it is the *Lord* who hath promised, whose Mercy is equally as Incomprehensible as his Omnipotency.

Of this *bearing* another *Psalm* makes mention, *I will hear what God the Lord will speak, Psal. 85. v. 8.* Don't listen what the *Flesh* or *Satan*, or *Human reason* say to thee, for they can speak nothing but

110 *The Devout Christian's*

but Despair; but hear what the Lord will speak, for *he speaketh Peace unto his People.* The Church is the People of the Lord, a peculiar People, and a People of his own purchase. Be thou there, and thou shalt hear the Lord speak Peace, it follows, *and to his Saints.* Here again Man's Weakness begins to sink, crying out, *O me miserable and wretched Creature! I am laden with Iniquity, what Fellowship can I have with the Saints?* But he doth not say to the Saints of the Law, or of Moses, but to his own Saints. Those are his Saints whom he sanctified by his Son.

If thy mind be not yet fully satisfied, hear what follows, *but let them not turn again to folly.* Don't lay the Greatness of thy Offences too much to Heart, only repent and thou shalt hear the Lord speaking Peace within thee. 'Twas the tidings of Peace which that famous Sinful Woman heard, *thy Faith hath saved thee, go in Peace, Luk. 7. ult.* Say with Da-

vid,

Preparative to Death. III

vid, but with an unfeigned Heart,
O Lord, *I have Sinned against thee.*
By two Words you may turn his
designed and prepared Vengeance
into Mercy. Such *Ears* had he
who said, *Sacrifice and offering*
thou didst not desire; but mine Ears
hast thou opened, Psal. 40. v. 6.
The 13th Psalm speaks of our
Eyes, Lighten mine Eyes, O Lord,
lest I sleep the sleep of Death; lest
mine Enemy say I have prevailed
against thee, v. 3. 4.

Here you see that the Victory
is rather in your *Eyes* than in your
Hands. *Death* darkens the *Eyes*
of the Body, but there is nothing
for our Enemy to boast of con-
cerning us, as long as Faith shines
in our Minds, never turning a-
side her *Eyes* from *Christ Crucified.*
Moreover, this is the scope
of the whole Psalm, that the Con-
templations of God's Mercy may
strengthen the Sick, and support
him in Despair. Therefore it
follows, *those that trouble me will*
rejoice when I am moved, v. 4.
That

112 *The Devout Christian's*

That is, if I stagger in my Faith. You hear of great Danger, and therefore pray take a speedy Help, *but I trusted in thy Mercy,* v. 5.

But whence can I have Hopes of Mercy? *My Heart shall rejoice in thy Salvation, I will sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt bountifully with me,* v. 6. The Salvation of God is Christ. Neither is there any other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved, *Acts 4. 12.* The Contemplation of Christ Crucified for us, is sufficient to turn our Despair into Hope, our Hope into Gladness. And he who was just nigh to Despair, said, *they that trouble me will rejoice when I am moved,* now saith, *my Heart shall rejoice in thy Salvation.* You have an account of the Victory, hearken next unto the Joy and Triumph, *I will Sing unto the Lord, because he hath dealt Bountifully with me.*

He

Preparative to Death. 113

He who hath no Goods of his own to rejoyce in, let him rejoyce in the Benefits which God hath freely given us by his Son. If we trust in our own good Works, our Adversary will rejoyce. But if we fasten the holy Anchor of our Hope on the Lord Jesus, our Enemy shall perish, as the Apostle rejoycing, saith, If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall not he with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? it is God that Justifieth, who is he that Condemneth? Rom. 8. v. 31, 32, 33, 34.

By this means it comes to pass that the course of things may be changed in a Moment, and he who just now seemed in a bad Condition; may gain the Victory thro' Christ; and as an Enemy who had begun to vaunt himself may be driven away and utterly defeated. *This is the Victory of Faith,*

114 *The Devout Christian's*
Faith, which St. John speaks of
in his 1 Ep. Chap. 5. v. 4, 5. *What-*
soever is born of God overcometh the
World, and this is the Victory that
overcometh the World, even our Faith;
but who is he that overcometh the
World, but he that believeth that
Jesus is the Son of God? whom
the Father would have to be the
Propitiation for the Sins of Man-
kind? As long as a Christian
Soldier stands on this Foot, al-
tho' his Enemy may surround
and assault him, he cannot over-
come him.

But in this last Engagement,
the Enemy aims mightily to bring
the Sick Man into Despair, which
is, of all Offences, the most grie-
vous. Therefore we must strive
against it, and endeavour to fur-
nish a Sick Man with those
Things which will establish his
Hope, and confirm his Strength.
The reciting of Places out of the
Holy Scriptures which recom-
mend the infinite Mercy of God,
as that of the Sinful Woman;

St. Pet
nial o
Love
will be
and m
he Lor
do and
of Ma
kind o
Comf
troubl
Just
upon
may e
their
forth
God,
Despi
aggra
for bea
have
all h
very
spair

* R
Christ
bles

Preparative to Death. 115

St. Peter's weeping after the Denial of his Master; and God's Love and Mercy towards Men, will be useful to this Purpose; and more especially that which the Lord Jesus was pleased both to do and to suffer for the Salvation of Mankind. Infinite are these kind of Places which afford great Comfort and Satisfaction to a troubled Mind. *

Just at this Season *Satan* heaps upon Men's Minds whatsoever may extinguish the least Spark of their Faith and Hope. He sets forth the Majesty and Justice of God, which they have so often Despised and Blasphemed. He aggravates *God's long Suffering and forbearance* towards Man, which have been slighted and rejected all his Life long; making that very thing an Argument of Despair, which ought rather to cherish

* Read The Daily Companion with Christian Supports under the Troubles of this World, &c.

116 *The Devout Christian's*
rith Hopes of Pardon. He reckons up how many Years have been ill spent, and how many Opportunities of doing good let slip. Suppose he hath done any thing well, he presents it ill by his Slanders and Cavilling. And he tempts the Faith of Man to doubt of the Authority of the Scriptures, putting into his Mind the Reasonings of the Philosophers, and Hereticks, and difficult Questions relating to the Creation, and Redemption of the World, the Immortality of the Soul, the Resurrection of the Body; also of Christ, whether he be true God and Man, of the Sacraments, what Power and Efficacy they are of? of the Foreknowledge and Predestination of God, turning all into Doubt, belief and Despair. To this purpose, he abuses the Testimonies of the Scripture, which he dares to do, even against our Lord himself, the Author of the Scriptures.

Beside

Pre

Beside

Sickness

Horror

our Na

satisfac

Sickne

vantag

this Br

outt b

he may

ceives

not off

from

Thing

toward

we m

disput

oil, bu

gestion

plain

Satan

doubt

Spirit

enoug

what

Reason

Son

sacred

Preparative to Death. 117

Besides the Troublesomeness of
Sickness, the Fear of *Death*, the
Horror of *Hell*, the Weakness of
our *Natural Mind*, with the Dis-
satisfaction, which a grievous
Sickness brings, are of great Ad-
vantage to the Adversary. To
this Breach our Enemy runs full
braving bringing all his Engines that
he may batter down what he per-
ceives Weakest. But as we must
not offer to struggle with Sin, but
from the Consideration of these
Things, we must turn our Mind
towards the Grace of *Christ*; so
we must not stand to reason or
dispute the matter with the *De-
vil*, but must baffle his evil Sug-
gestions with these or the like
plain Words, *Get thee behind me
Satan*: 'Tis not lawful for me to
doubt those Things, which the
Spirit of God has dictated. It is
enough to hold fast by Faith,
what I do not comprehend by
Reason.

Some inform us (not out of the
Sacred Writings indeed, but yet
very

very agreeable to what we are now speaking of) of two Men whom the *Devil* tempted concerning their Faith, when they were a Dying: The one a Philosopher, the other a poor Ignorant Christian. The first of these the *Devil* asked, what he believed Whether *Christ* is God and Man Whether he was born of a *Virgin* Whether there was any Resurrection of the Dead? And he began to shew by Philosophical Reasons that those Things could not be joined together in one, between which there was no Affinity; as a Finite and Infinite, a Created and an Uncreated. That it was contrary to the Law of Nature, that a *Virgin* should conceive and bring forth without Copulation, that it is Contradictory to *Aristotle*, the Chief Philosopher, that there is a return from Privation to Habit. What need many Words? The Man stumbled and fell, the *Devil* got the Victory. Now he comes to

the

the ignorant Man, and asked him what he believed of this and that? He answered in a few Words, what the Scripture teaches. *Devil*, What doth the Scripture teach? *Man*, What I believe. *Devil*, What do you believe? *Man*, What the Scripture teaches. *Devil*, And what doth the Scripture teach? *Man*, Why what I believe. The *Tempter* being presently Overcome, went away from this Man, who was not for dispute, but had a firm and stedfast Faith.

This Answer is sufficient to repel our Treacherous Enemy. And especially in obscure and dubious Matters it is of great Consequence. As suppose an Enemy or *Socinian* should enquire, how the same Numerical Essence can be included in Three Persons, how they may be distinguished, and the like difficult Questions; let him answer, So as the Scripture teaches. If *Satan* should force into his Mind the Heinousness of his Offences, let him turn unto

unto God and say, Turn thy Face
 from my Sins, *Mat. 51. 1.* and look
 upon the Face of Jesus thine Ap-
 pointed, *Psal. 84. v. 9.* Devil,
 Thy Sins are more in number
 than the Sands of the Sea-shore.
 Man, The Mercy of the Lord is
 much more abundant. Devil,
 How do you who are altogether
 Unrighteous hope for the reward
 of Righteousness? Man, Christ is
 my Righteousness. Devil, What
 shall you who are covered with
 nothing but Iniquity go into rest
 with Peter and Paul? Man, No,
 but with the Thief on the Cross,
 who heard, To Day thou shalt be
 with me in Paradise, *Luk. chap. 23.*
v. 43. Devil, From whence have
 you that assurance, when you
 have done no good Work? Man,
 Because I have a Good and Boun-
 tiful Lord, a Merciful Judge, and
 a Gracious Advocate. Devil, You
 shall be cast into Hell. Man, My
 Head is in Heaven. Devil, You
 shall be Damned. Man, You
 are a Slanderer, no Judge, you

Preparative to Death. 121

re damned your self, you can
condemn none. *Devil*, Many
regions of Devils wait for your
soul. *Man*, I should despair, had
not a *Protector* who hath over-
come your Tyranny. *Devil*, God
is unjust if he grants Eternal Life
to Sinners. *Man*, he is just who
keeps his Promises, and I have
long since appealed from his Ju-
stice to his Mercy. *Devil*, You
batter your self with vain Hopes.
Man, Truth cannot lye, it be-
ongs to you to deceive by your
promises. *Devil*, You see what
you leave behind you, what you
are to have you do not see. *Man*,
The Things which are seen are
temporal, but the Things which are
not seen are Eternal, 2 Cor. 4. 18.
Man, He more than sees who stedfast-
ly Believes. *Devil*, You go hence
laden with Iniquity, destitute of
Goodness. *Man*, I will pray
the Lord to deliver me from my
sins, and to Cloath me with his
righteousness. *Devil*, But God
saith not Sinners, *Joh. 9. 31.*
F *Man*

Man, But he heareth Penitents
and hath died for Sinners. *Devil*

Your Repentance is too late

Man, That of the Thief was not
too late. *Devil*, You falsely per-

suade your self that you have

Merciful *Lord*, who Torment

you with so many Evils. *Man*

he heals them as a tender Phy-

cian. *Devil*, Why then doth he

make your *Death* so Terrible

Man, He is the *Lord*, he can do

nothing but what is good; what

shall I poor Sinful Wretch refuse

to suffer what the *Lord* of Glor-

hath suffered? *Devil*, It is a dread-

ful thing to die. *Man*, Blessed

the Dead which die in the Lord

Rev. 14. 13. *Devil*, But the *Dea*

of Sinners is the worst of a

Man, He is no longer a Sinner

who confesses himself to be a Sin-

ner with hopes of Mercy. *Devil*

You leave this World. *Man*

go from a grievous Exile into

own Country. *Devil*, You must

leave all these Goods. *Man*, But

much more Evils. *Devil*, You

Preparative to Death. 123

Must leave your Riches. *Man*,
They are anothers, which I leave,
My own I carry with me. *Devil*,
What do you carry? when there
is nothing that is good in you?
Man, This verily is my own,
Which the *Lord* freely gives me.
Devil, You leave your Wife and
Children. *Man*, They are the
Lord's, I commit them wholly to
him. *Devil*, It is a cruel thing to
be taken away from our most
dear Friends. *Man*, In a short
time they will follow me. *Devil*,
You are snatched away from
our best and most familiar
friends. *Man*, I hasten to those
that are better.

But because this most cunning
Enemy, when he cannot draw
Men to Despair, doth inveigle
them to put Confidence in them-
selves, that those whom he can-
not thrust down Headlong, he
may by lifting up bring to Con-
fusion; a Sick Man is also to be
fortified against this great Dan-
ger. As well as against the Cal-

124 *The Devout Christian's*

abyss or bottomless Gulf of Despair; it is safe, the more *Satan* depresses a Man with the Conscience of his Sins, to exalt himself so much the more, in the Assurance of God's Mercy, and the mystical Fellowship with *Christ*.

So it will be an immediate Remedy against the *Scylla* of Arrogancy, to humble himself with due Consideration of his own Infirmity. For whosoever is strong and exalted in *Christ*, but lowly and despicable in himself, can never be cast down by *Satan*, nor crushed by him.

Such a thing we read in the *Chronicles* of the *Ancients*, concerning *Anthony* the Monk whom *Satan* opposed a Thousand ways and yet could never conquer him. But on a certain time when he had often applied all his crafty Engines and found they could do no good, he own'd himself to be overcome in these Words, *I lose all my Labour: I strive against the Stream: If I can*

Preparative to Death. 125

*you down, you exalt your self, if I
lift you up, you cast your self down.*

Suppose *Satan* should talk after
this manner. You are worthy to
sit down amongst the *Cherubims*
and *Seraphims* ; let the Sick Man
answer, my Worthiness is nothing
but that I acknowledge my Un-
worthiness. *Devil*, You have
prayed much, you have fasted
often, you have led an holy Life,
you have given abundance in
Alms, to your poor and needy
Brethren. *Man*, All these Things
which you tell me of, agree equal-
ly to the *Pharisees*, whom our Sa-
viour has rejected. If I have done
any good Work, it is the *Lord's*,
not mine. *Devil*, But you are
free from those Vices which this
and that Man are addicted to.
Man, Therefore I have the great-
er Reason to thank the *Lord*, not
to please my self, for if the *Lord's*
Mercy had not prevented me, and
the like Temptation had over-
come me, I should have done
these things or much worse.

With such brief and ready Answers a Sick Man is to be well provided against *Satan's* evil Suggestions. The Examples of the Saints are to be recollected, and those especially who have been the most remarkable Objects of Divine Mercy; such as *David* who heaped *Adultery* upon *Murder*, and escaped Vengeance with two Words; the *Ninevites*, *Ahab*, the *Prodigal Son*, the *Publican*, whose real Honesty the Lord prefers before Pharisaical Holiness. The *Woman*, who tho' she had been so grievous a Sinner, yet heard from the Lord, *thy Sins be forgiven Thee*, *Mat.* The *Adulteress* heard *Go and Sin no more* *John* 8. 11. *St. Peter* who thrice deny'd his Master, *Mat.* 26. ult. *St. Paul* who persecuted the Church of God, putting in Prison and killing those who professed the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, *Acts* 22. 4. 19. *Cyprian* who of a Magician was made a Martyr; and very many others who from Idolatry, from Blasphemy,

my

ny, from horrid Transgressions;
thro' *Faith* in *Christ*, obtained
Mercy and an everlasting Crown
of Glory.

To exclude Despair, and esta-
lish Hope, the Writings of the
New Testament are more effectual
than the *Old*. And no wonder
they are so. *Moses* affrighted the
Jews by *Commands*, *Christ* hath
Comforted all Men by *Faith* and
Grace; But the sacred Volumes
furnish us not only with good
Examples, but with many Say-
ings, some of which strike an
awful Fear into Men, and there
are others which Comfort those
that are afraid. This is the main
scope of all the Prophetical Books,
to amplify God's Vengeance to-
wards those that swerve from
him, and again to enlarge his
Mercy towards those that turn
unto him by Repentance.

Both these Remedies are
Wholesome if they be well and
seasonably apply'd. Those which
terrifie are to be administered to

128 *The Devout Christian's*

Persons of Healthful Bodies, but evil Minds; to the Insolent, to those that are intoxicated with the Prosperity of this Life, and stupified or cast into a dead Sleep with the Pleasures of this World that by this means, as by the taking of *Hellebore*, they may be brought to their right Understanding, or as by taking of *Colewort*, they may be induced to a Sober Mind.

Those other Places that extend hopes of Pardon, are to be administred to the Timorous and Fearful, especially in danger of *Death*. Altho' neither are those to be possessed with such Fear as excludes all hope of Pardon; nor are these to be deceived and flattered with smooth Words and Delusions. It is one thing to correct, another to discourage; one thing to comfort, another to flatter.

Therefore it is of great Moment, what kind of People visit the Sick; it is fit that they should have

P

have d
ready a
her rea
suppor
ers dis
very su
For so
which
Person
by ign
the Sic
The

of all,
advised
Charit
Neigh
ple, fro
forgive
ended
patien
in Chr
ness, a
sign hi
holy V
ng th
twice
nath
Trant

have

have divers Places of Scripture ready at Hand, which being either read or said by Heart, may support them; some short Prayers discreetly compos'd will be very suitable for this Occasion. For some very indifferent ones which were made by illeterate Persons are often recommended by ignorant People to the use of the Sick.

The most effectual Comfort of all, is, that the Sick Man be advised to excite his Faith and Charity towards God and his Neighbour, as much as he is able, freely and from his Heart to forgive all those who have offended him, and to suffer with Patience, and for the sake of *Jesus Christ*, all the Pains of his Sickness, and *Death* it self, and to resign himself in every thing to God's holy Will and Pleasure, reckoning that he will not pass Sentence twice against him; and that *Christ* hath made Atonement for our Transgressions upon the Cross.

130 *The Devout Christian's*

From these Fountains, and especially that of his Blood, let him beg Remission of his Sins. So that trusting nothing in himself, and putting his whole Confidence in the Mercy of God, and in the Merits of *Jesus Christ*; he may, with a Religious Faith and Heart, say these Words, *Lord, Into thine Hands I commend my Spirit*, v. 23, 46. It is no Presumption for a Sinner, and infirm Person to make use of the Words of his Lord and Master. For therefore our Head speaks them in *himself*, that we who are his Members may imitate him. But if any one desires to have an Example from the Saints, let him say with St. Stephen, *O Lord Jesus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. 59.

Examples are of great Efficacy to cheer Mens Minds, for they represent to us, just as it were in a Glass, what ought to be done, and what ought not. And because in outward things we are more ready to be influenced by what

P
we see
it is
with
ever
we ma
good
it. F
what
one ha
more
ample
hath
when
fortifi
Food
again
then a
ing us
to Ca
threat
with
Conf
washe
shoul
rence
of th
make
vinci
nemy

Preparative to Death. 131

we see, than what we barely hear, it is very useful to be present with dying Persons, that whatsoever we see detestable in them we may avoid it, and whatsoever good and pious, we may imitate it. For at that Instant it appears, what *Faith* and *Conscience* every one hath. But there can be none more compleat and perfect Example, than that which our *Lord* hath shew'd us in *himself*. For when his last Hour was come, he fortified his Disciples with the Food of his *Holy Body* and *Blood*, against the Storm of Temptation then at Hand, thereby admonishing us, that as often as we fall into Calamity or a *Disease* which threatens *Death*; we should forthwith cleanse our Affections by Confession, even as the *Lord* washed his Disciples Feet. We should presently with due Reverence, receive the *Body* and *Blood* of the *Lord*, which Food will make our Souls strong, and invincible against our Spiritual Enemy

F 6

The

The Lord made no Will, but his fiery Word was instead of his Will and Testament, which St. *John* urges more Vehemently, and the Institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is for a Remembrance of his Death. These Words also from the Cross looked something like a Will, *Woman behold thy Son*; and to the Disciple, *behold thy Mother*, *John* 19. 26, 27. As to secular Matters therefore we must be brief, but as to the Things relating to Faith and Charity more Copious. The Words of Persons when they are dying, are wont to be caught at greedily, and to make great Impression upon the Minds of the Hearers; either because no Man is thought to dissemble at that Instant, or because, whilst the Soul begins to be separated from the Body which it is burthened with, it often gives a token of that Liberty and Knowledge to which it is approaching.

But

Preparative to Death. 133

But let us return to the Example of our Redeemer; after the *Mystical Supper*, he departed from the *House* into the *Garden*, and having Commanded his other Disciples to tarry there, he only took a-part with himself, *Peter* and *John* and *James*, the *Sons of Zebedee*, *Mat. 26. 36* that he might have the same Witnesses of his human Infirmary, as he had of his *Transfiguration* in the Mount of Glory. To these he confessed his bitter Sorrows of Mind, more grievous very often than *Death* it self. Having Commanded these to *watch and pray, v. 41.* He went aside again to Prayer. There is an hidden Mystery in the *Lord's* Bodily withdrawing.

He that prepares himself to die, let him give no heed to either Civil or Domestick Affairs. Let him cast away the Care of the Common-wealth: Let him quite shake off all Solicitude about his Possessions. His Wife and Children are to be commended to the *Lord*, and
all

134 *The Devout Christian's*

all Dependance on Relations and Friends cast off. Let him not harbour his most intimate and dearest Companions in his Bosom. He ought to be by himself alone, who is minded, without any Interruption, then to converse with his *Heavenly Father*, when his last and greatest Temptations assault him. Thus he warns those that *sleep to Watch and pray, that they enter not into Temptation, v. 41.* He enters into Temptation, who yields himself into the Power of the *Tempter*; Temptation indeed at the first sets upon those that *watch and pray*, but it presently passeth away again. That which our *Lord* told his Three Disciples he said to all of us.

They *slept* and therefore fell into Temptation. *Mat. 26. v. 40.* St. Peter, the most Valiant of the *Twelve*, deny'd his *Master, v. 70, 72, 74.* The others ran away for fear, being ready even to have forsworn him, had they been in the same danger.

The Weakness of Men is overcome

come
they
Affe
Faith
alone
Fu
vouc
Exar
must
kneel
was
Mat
cry'
a V
thre
cast
with
ed to
the f
but
Kne
self
H
find
ly n
We
sola
Nei

Preparative to Death. 135

come in Tryal of *Death*, unless they do instantly, and with pure Affection, and with a stedfast Faith implore the aid of him who alone Quickens the Dead.

Further, our *Redeemer* hath vouchsafed to shew us by his own Example, after what manner we must pray in that Condition, *He kneeled down, Luk. 22. 41.* Neither was that all, *He fell down on his Face, Mat. 26. 39.* From the Earth he cry'd to his Father with so strong a Voice, that he was heard by the three Disciples who were a Stone's cast off him, *Luk. 22. 41.* and heavy with sleep, *Mat. 26. 43.* He returned to Prayers twice. He repeated the same Words thrice; *Not as I will, but as thou wilt, v. 39.* He bends his Knees, who wholly Submits himself to God's Will and Pleasure.

He falls down on his Face, who finds fault with himself, and wholly mistrusts his own Strength and Well-doings, and expects no Consolation but from God's Mercy. Neither must we presently despair if

126 *The Devout Christian's*
if Consolation be deferred, we
must return again and again to fer-
vent hearty Prayer. For if we
Practice Spiritually what the Lord
performed Bodily, he will send his
Holy Angels to wipe away the
bloody Sweat from our Eves, he
will either deliver us from Danger,
or grant us the Strength of his
Spirit to enable us to suffer *Death*
with the greater Constancy.

Lastly, let us go up to the Cross
with our Lord Naked, separate
from all Earthly Affections, ad-
vanced towards the Love of the
Heavenly Life, that we may say
with St. Paul, *the World is Crucifi-*
ed unto me, and I to the World, Gal.
6. 14. And then fastned with these
Nails, *Faith, Hope, and Charity*, let
us always persevere in them, fight-
ing Victoriously with the *Devil*,
till having overcome him, we
pass into everlasting Rest thro'
the Merits and Grace of our Lord
Jesus Christ, to whom with the
Father and the *Holy Ghost*, be Praise
and Glory, for ever and ever. *A-*
men. P R I.



P

D

Dire

As for
ing
ty



cular
last
me
Day
tect
it.
Body
Iunc
most
Prot
keep



PRIVATE DEVOTIONS.

Directions for the Morning.

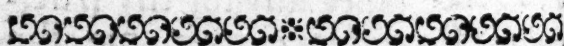
As soon as you awake in the Morning, dedicate your self to Almighty God in this short Prayer.

 **G O D**, I thank thee for all thy undeserved Mercies bestowed upon me, especially for thy particular Providence over me the last Night ; as thou hast brought me safely to the beginning of this Day, so I beseech Thee to protect me in it, and guide me thro. it. I commend my self, Soul and Body, all that I have, and all that I undertake, into the Hands of thy most gracious Providence and Protection ; beseeching Thee to keep both me and mine from all
Sin

138 *Private Devotions*

Sin and Danger, and to bless my honest Endeavours in that lawful Station wherein thou hast placed me.

As soon as you are drest, it is adviseable to retire into some private Apartment, and to spend some little Portion of time in examining your Conscience, and in reading attentively some part either of the Holy Scriptures ; or of some good Books ; which may help to teach and stir you up to your Duty : And when you have done this, Address your self to God in the following Prayer.



MORNING PRAYER.

From Bishop Duppa.

I. **O** Eternal God, my Maker and Redeemer ; I adore and bless thy holy Name, that thou hast, with such admirable Patience, not only suffered me to live to this Hour, but withal hast multiplied, thy

for the Morning. 139

thy daily Blessings upon me (*especially thy Preservation of me the Night past*) even then when I, by my Sinful Life, have most unkindly and treacherously rebelled against Thee.

But who knows, O Merciful Lord, how soon thy blessed Patience may end? Or how speedily thou may'st call me to a sad account for all my former Days so miserably Mispent?

For O! how many are they on whom the Morning Sun hath shined, that have not lived to see it Set? And how know I, but this may be my last Day too? The only Day which thou, O God, hast left me to *set my Soul in Order*, and to prepare for my last End?

O my dear Lord, suffer me not then to neglect this blessed Season, but by an hearty Repentance speedily, turn me this Morning, this Instant cause me to return unto Thee, that how soon soever thou shalt call me to my Transmigration

migration from this Life, my Accounts may be found audited, my Sins cancelled, and my Soul acquitted, by the *Blood* of that *Lamb, that takes away the Sins of the World.*

If thou pleasest to add more Days to my Life, give me Grace to consecrate them unto thy Service, and to redeem the Time which I cannot recal, and keep me ever under the Wings of thy Protection, that neither Sin nor Danger may approach to hurt me.

Grant this, O my God, for his sake that vouchsafed to die for me, *thy only Son Jesus Christ the Righteous.* Amen.

II. O Lord our Heavenly Father Almighty and Everlasting God, who hast safely brought me to the beginning of this Day, defend me in the same with thy mighty Power, and grant that this Day I fall into no Sin, neither run into any kind of Danger, but that all my Thoughts, Words and Acti-

ons,

ons, most
ther'd
dy H
ver-r
whate
do, m
and
Hear
O Fa
Amen
III
God,
hast
and
That
besee
recei
offer
besee
tinua
with
and
they
Nam
of th
Unit
seech

ons, may be prevented by thy most Gracious Favour, and further'd by thy continual and ready Help, and ordered by thy over-ruling Governance; that whatever I shall speak, think, or do, may be always Righteous and Acceptable in thy Sight. Hear me, I humbly intreat Thee, O Father, for *Jesus Christ's* Sake. Amen.

III. *Almighty and Everliving God*, who by thy holy Apostle hast taught me to make Prayers and Supplications, and to give Thanks for all Men; I humbly beseech Thee most Mercifully to receive this my Prayer, which I offer unto thy Divine Majesty, beseeching Thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the Spirit of Truth, Unity and Concord: And grant that all they that do confess thy Holy Name, may agree in the Truth of thy Holy Word, and live in Unity and Godly Love, I beseech Thee also to save and defend

send all Christian Kings, Princes
and Governours, and especially
thy Servant **G E O R G E** our
K I N G, that under *Him* we may
be Godly and quietly governed;
and grant unto *Him* whole Coun-
cil, and to all that are put in Au-
thority under *Him*, that they may
truly and indifferently Minister
Justice, to the Punishment of
Wickedness and Vice, and to the
maintenance of thy true Religi-
on and Virtue. Give Grace, O
Heavenly Father, to all Bishops
and Curates, that they may both
by their Life and Doctrine set
forth thy true and lively Word,
and rightly and duly Administer
thy Holy Sacraments: and to all
thy People give thy Heavenly
Grace, and especially to *all my*
Relations, Friends, and
Benefactors; Sanctifie
'em with thy Grace,
preserve 'em with
thy Providence, guard them from
all Evil by the Custody of An-
gels, direct them in the ways of
Peace

Here name thy
nearest Relati-
ons and kindest
Friends.

Peace
condu
config
cipatio
ces in
Bodies
ings,
full
the W
humb
Good
and S
Tran
are
Sorro
Sickn
other
O
ble a
great
and
for
Sand
for
Hop
and
ly V
thy

for the Morning. 143

Peace and holy Religion by the conduct of thy holy Spirit, and consign them all with the Participation of thy Blessings and Graces in this World, with healthful Bodies, with good Understandings, and sanctified Spirits, to a full Fruition of thy Glories in the World to come. And I most humbly beseech Thee of thy Goodness, O Lord, to Comfort and Succour all them who in this Transitory Life

are in Trouble, Sorrow, Need, Sicknes, or any

*Here name those in Sicknes or Trouble, that desire thy Prayers.

other Adversity. [* Especially]

O Lord, I give Thee humble and hearty Thanks for all thy great Mercies both Temporal and Spiritual bestow'd upon me, for my Creation, Redemption, Sanctification and Preservation; for the Means of Grace, and Hopes of Glory, for all thy Saints and Servants, holy Men, and holy Women, departed this Life in thy Faith and Fear, beseeching
Thee

144 *Private Devotions*

Thee to give me Grace ~~so to fol-~~
low their good Examples, that
with them I may be Partaker of
thy Heavenly Kingdom.

I bless thy holy Name for thy
particular Providence over me
and mine, the last Night; and
since thou hast brought me to
the beginning of this Day, grant
that I may spend it in thy Fear
and Service, walking before Thee
in Holiness and Righteousness,
this and all the Days of my Life,
thro' *Jesus Christ* our Lord, to
whom with Thee and the *Holy*
Ghost be all Honour and Glory,
World without End. *Amen.*

Our Father which art in Hea-
ven, &c.

IV. Now in all Tribulation
and Anguish of Spirit, in all Dan-
gers, both of Soul and Body, in
Prosperity and Adversity, in the
Hour of Death, and the Day of
Judgment, *Holy* and most *Blessed*
Jesus, have Mercy upon me, save
and deliver me, and all faithful
People. *Amen.*

Note,

Note,
be on
ers,
you a
for I

P R A

I Pro
O

n all P

y, I

ance

tant C

ne eve

ularly

ithert

rovidi

Things

nd Ple

uppor

peciall

xceed

esw,

ven

Note, The Lord's Prayer is never to be omitted. The foregoing Prayers, may be used by a Family, if you alter the Number, saying, We for I, and Us for Me, &c.

PRAYERS at NOON.

From Bishop Patrick.

I Prostrate my self before Thee;
 O Lord of Heaven and Earth,
 In all Humility of Soul and Body,
 I acknowledge my Dependence
 upon Thee, and thy constant
 Care and Providence over
 me ever since I was born; particularly
 this Day, in keeping me
 hitherto from many Dangers, and
 providing for me many good
 Things; as well for the Comfort
 and Pleasure, as for the necessary
 support of this present Life. Especially
 I thank Thee for thy
 exceeding great Love in the Lord
 Jesus, through whom thou hast
 given me good hope of better

G

En-

146 *Private Devotions*

Enjoyments in the Life to come, by following that blessed Example which he hath set us all of well-doing and contented suffering.

It is all reason, O Lord, that I should love Thee, and entirely trust in Thee, and most willingly serve and obey Thee. Accordingly, I here again dedicate myself, both Soul and Body to Thee. I vow my self ever to thy Service, I hope still in thy great Mercies, which have been so tender and so Abundant towards me. I depend upon Thee, for what thou seest to be profitable for me. I refer my self absolutely to thy wise Will, resolving to rest contented and satisfied in that Condition wherein thou placest me. I believe thou orderest all Things in Heaven and in Earth, and takest the greatest Care of those that wait upon Thee, and commit themselves unto Thee, as now I do in Confidence of thy Goodness and Submission to thy Pleasure.

Especially

Especially
or thy
in me
inspire
Thou
Heaven
and st
hope
leavou
ious
Bless
or wh
thank
ations
Grace
or the
nce th
appy
ithal
ue W
the e
o grow
made p
ord an
honour
Thee,
without

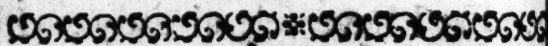
Especially I rely upon Thee
for thy holy Spirit, to preserve
in me these holy Purposes, and
inspire me continually with good
Thoughts, and stir up in me
Heavenly Affections, and increase
and strengthen my Faith and
hope in Thee, and assist my En-
deavours to do according to my
holy Resolutions.

Blessed be thy great Goodness,
for what I have felt already; I
thank Thee for thy many Illumi-
nations from above; for thy
Grace so early preventing me;
for the Assistance and Further-
ance thou hast given me, and the
happy Opportunities I have met
withal, of improving my self in
true Wisdom and Godliness. It
is the earnest desire of my Soul
to grow more in both, and to be
made perfectly like to my *blessed*
Lord and Saviour: by whom all
Honour and Glory be given to
Thee, O *Father Almighty*, World-
without End. *Amen.*

148 *Private Devotions*

*Our Father which art in Heaven
hollowed be thy Name, &c.*

II. *God the Father, God the Son
God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve
and keep me, the Lord merciful
ly with his Favour look upon me
and so fill me with all Spiritual
Benediction and Grace, that
may so live in this Life, that
in the World to come I may have
Life Everlasting. Amen.*



Directions for the Evening

*Before you betake your self to Rest
recollect the several Transactions
of the Day past, giving God the
Glory of what you have done well
and imploring his Forgiveness for
what you have done amiss, toge-
ther with his Grace and Assistance
to enable you to do better for the
time to come. Read The Daily
Self-Examinant, &c. and some
part of the Scriptures, as in the
Morning, and then say the fol-
lowing Prayers.*

EVENING

EVENING PRAYERS.

O Lord, I beseech Thee Mercifully to hear my Prayers, and spare both me and all those that confess their Sins unto Thee; that they whose Consciences by Sin are accused, by thy Merciful Pardon may be absolved, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

From Dr. Hammond.

O Eternal Lord God, who hast Created the World and all Time, and who hast made my Days as it were a Span long. and mine Age as nothing in respect of Thee: Teach me to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart to thy Heavenly Wisdom, and may so carefully employ that short time which thou hast appointed me to spend here, so make up my reckoning before thou callest me from hence, that I may then give such an Account of the Talents wherewith thou hast intrusted me, that I may receive that Joy-
ful

150 *Private Devotions*

ful Sentence: *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* Blessed be thy holy Name, O Lord my God, who hast shewed me the Light of thy Countenance, and caused me to see thy Goodness in the Land of the Living, who hast preserved me in all my ways, and delivered me from many Evils and Dangers.

O Lord, forsake me not in the vanishing of my Days, but still continue the Protection of thy gracious Hand upon me; be thou my Light and Defence, my Guide and Guard, through the Valley of Misery and Tears, and the Shadow of Death, to that holy Hill, where thine Honour and our Rest dwelleth. Give me Grace to remember the Days of Darkness, that I may be ready and provided, whensoever thou shalt call me to Judgment, and whether I live or die (this Night) I recommend my self to thy Mercy and Goodness; beseeching Thee to receive me under thy

Wings

Wing
from
my S
Safety
provi
and r
Virgin
groom
a bl
watc
So co
Amer
III. I
by th
from
Nigh
our S
Fr
IV. (I be
upon
prec
by t
ctua
thy
that

Wings, where I may rest secure from all Evil; and to preserve my Soul in perpetual Peace and Safety. Grant that I may be provided with *Oil in my Lamp*, and ready to *enter in with the wise Virgins*, whensoever the *Bridegroom shall come*, and may receive a blessing among those which watch and wait for thy coming; So come Lord *Jesus*, come quickly. Amen.

III. **L**ighten my darkness I beseech Thee, O Lord, and by thy great Mercy defend me from all Perils and Dangers of this Night, for the Love of *thy only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ*. Amen.

From the Whole Duty of Man.

IV. **O** Blessed Lord, whose Mercy is over all thy Works, I beseech Thee to have Mercy upon all Men, and grant that the precious Ransom which was paid by thy Son for all, may be effectual to the saving of all. Give thy enlightning Grace to those that are in Darkness, and thy

152 *Private Devotions*

converting Grace to those that are in Sin ; look with thy tenderest Compassions upon the *Universal Church*. O be favourable and gracious unto *Sion*, build thou the Walls of *Jerusalem* : Unite all those that profess thy Name to Thee, by Purity, and Holiness ; and to each other by Brotherly Love. Have Mercy on this desolate Church, and Sinful Nation ; thou hast moved the Land, and divided it, heal the Sores thereof for it shaketh ; make us so truly to repent of those Sins which have provoked thy Judgments, that thou also may'st turn and repent, and leave a Blessing behind Thee. Bless those whom thou hast appointed our Governours, whether in Church or State ; so rule their Hearts, and strengthen their Hands, that they may neither want Will nor Power to punish Wickedness and Vice, and to maintain God's true Religion and Verrue. Have pity, O Lord, on all that are in Affliction ; be a
Father

Father
therless
the Ca
dow,
Feeble
heal th
defenc
nister
their f
Blessin
near a
them
cessar
their S
all th
done
pardo
or wi
them
may
Sight
An
bles
Spiri
fings
Crea
catic
Rest

Father to the Fatherless, and plead the Cause of the Widow, comfort the

Here recommend those who have desired thy Prayers.

FeebleMinded, support the Weak, heal the Sick, relieve the Needy, defend the Oppressed, and Administer to every one according to their several Necessities; Let thy Blessings rest upon all that are near and dear to me, and grant them whatsoever thou seest necessary, either to their Bodies or their Souls. Reward

Here name thy all those that have nearest Relations done me good, and

pardon all those that have done or wisht me Evil, and work in them and me all that good which may make us acceptable in thy Sight.

And now, O Lord, I desire to bless and praise Thee for all the Spiritual and Temporal Blessings I enjoy in this Life, for my Creation, Redemption, Sanctification and Preservation; for thy Restraining, Inciting, and Assisting

154 *Private Devotions*

ing Grace; for my Health, Friends,
Food and Raiment; for my
Peace, Plenty, and Prosperity;
for the continuance of my Sense
and Reason, for all the Comforts,
as well as the Necessaries of this
Life; for those continual Prote-
ctions of thy Hand, by which I
and mine are kept from Dangers,

Here reflect on thy and those great
most remarkable Mer- Deliverances (e-
cies and Deliverances specially ----)
from Sickness, Danger, and the like. thou hast often

afforded out of such as have be-
fallen me, and for that Mercy of
thine whereby thou hast sweet-
ned and allayed those Troubles
thou hast not seen fit wholly to
remove. The Sins of this Day
thou hast not repaid, as justly
thou mightest, by sweeping me
away with a swift Destruction;
but hast spared and preserved me
according to the Greatness of thy
Mercy. What shall I render un-
to the Lord for all these Benefits
he hath done unto me? Lord, let
this Goodness of thine lead me to

Re-

Repent
may
Praise
Obedi
these
earnest
thou h
Love
whom
of Et
bey h

V. T
the B
Fatha
The
Cros
ever

Whil
co
re
B
in
an
fo

for the Evening. 155

Repentance, and grant that I may not only shew forth thy Praise with my Lips, but in the Obedience of my Life, that these Blessings here may be an earnest of those richer Blessings thou hast prepared for those that Love Thee, and that for his sake, whom thou hast made the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey him, even *Jesus Christ*. Amen.

V. **T**HE Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, the Blessing of God *Almighty*, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*; The Virtue of *Christ's* blessed Cross, be with me both now and evermore. Amen.

While you are undressing your self consider the approach of your latter End, and let the sight of your Bed put you in mind of your Winding Sheet and Grave. When you are in Bed before you Compose your self to Rest, say;

From

From the Whole Duty of Man.

O *Blessed Lord, the Keeper of Israel, that neither slumberest nor sleepest, be pleased in thy Mercy, to watch over me this Night; Keep me by thy Grace, from all Works of darkness and defend me by thy Power from all Dangers, grant me moderate and refreshing Sleep, such as may fit me for the Duties of the Day following. And, Lord, make me ever mindful of that Time when I shall lie down in the Dust; And because I know neither the Day nor the Hour of my Master's coming, grant me Grace that I may be always ready, that I may never live in such a State as I shall Fear to die in; but that whether I live, I may live unto the Lord, or whether I die, I may die unto the Lord, so that Living and Dying, I may be thine, through Jesus Christ. Amen.*

*When**When*

GR
v
ternal
part i
that
preva

O
Merc
my S
Fathe
God t
shine
unto
lift u
me,
Nigh
more

If you
E.
D

L
som
Dea

for the Evening. 157

*When you close your Eyes to sleep say;
From Bishop Taylor.*

GRant, O Lord, that I may never sleep in Sin or Death Eternal, but that I may have my part in the First Resurrection, and that the Second Death may not prevail over me. Amen.

O Lord, unto thy Gracious Mercy and Protection I commit my Soul and Body. O God the Father, bless me and keep me. O God the Son, make thy Face to shine upon me, and be gracious unto me. O God the Holy Ghost, lift up thy Countenance upon me, and give me thy Peace this Night, henceforth, and for evermore.

*If you awake in the Night, say this
Excellent Prayer against sudden
Death.*

From Mr. Kettlewel.

LORD, they who have led the best Lives are desirous of some time to prepare for their Death. But my Life has abounded

158 *Private Devotions*

ed in Sins and Frailties, which make me stand in much greater need thereof. Snatch me not away therefore to give up my Accounts by the surprize of a *sudden Death*, but deliver me from an unprepared Heart, and an unexpected End.

As I Sin daily, O God, let me repent daily, and stand always upon my watch, that I may be ready for Thee, whensoever thou callest me: But give me time and leisure, if it may please Thee, to put my Spirit in the best order I can for leaving this World, and appearing before Thee, and taking my leave of all decently; that, with more Satisfaction to my Friends, and with more Settlement of Mind and Comfort to my self, I may yield it up into the Hands of thy Mercy, thro' *Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour.* Amen.

This Prayer may be said at any time when there is Opportunity to retire.

Directions

§§§§

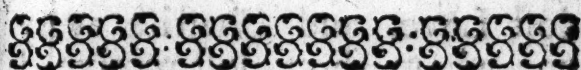
Direct

Whene
in th
Guia
of
pray
assiss
spok
Adm
the
koly
assiss
may
your
your
Con

P R

I. O

dost



Directions for the SICK.

Whenever you begin to be Sick, call in the Assistance of your Spiritual Guides. Sending for the Elders of the Church that they may pray over you, Jam. 5. 4. And assist and comfort you by Words spoken in their due Season, and Administer to you the Word and the Benefit of Absolution, and the holy Communion, resolving and assisting you in all Things, that may be needful for the finishing of your Repentance, the support of your Spirit, and the Peace of your Conscience.



PRAYERS to be used by a SICK PERSON.

I. **O** Almighty, Everlasting God,
 Maker of Mankind. who
 dost correct those whom thou
 dost

160 *Private Devotions.*

dost Love; and Chastise every one whom thou dost receive, I beseech Thee to have Mercy upon me thy Servant visited with thine Hand; and to grant that I may take my Sickness patiently, and recover my Bodily Health (if it be thy Gracious Will;) and whensoever my Soul shall depart from my Body, it may be without Spot, presented unto Thee, thro' *Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

From Bishop Ken.

II. Give me thy Servant, O Lord, Patience in my Sorrows, Comfort in my Sicknes, and restore me to Health if it seem good to Thee. And however thou shalt determine concerning me in this Affair, yet make my Repentance perfect, and my Faith strong, and my Hope stedfast, and my Passage safe; that when thou shalt call my Soul from this Prison of the Body, it may enter into the Rest of the Sons of God, and the Bosom of Blessedness, and be with the *Holy Jesus.* Amen.

III. Lord

III
Neces
vant,
Spiri
nation
ordin
and
fire
Free
Fruit

IV
the
of t
my
me
me
Let
Ho
dis
and
ry.
V
sen
eve
O
eff
per

III. *Lord*, thou knowest all the Necessities of me thy Sinful Servant, O fortifie my Soul with Spiritual Joys, and perfect Resignation, and take from me all inordinate Affections to this World; and enlarge my Heart with desire of being with Thee, and of Freedom from Sin, and of the Fruition of God.

IV. *Lord*, impute not unto me the Follies of my Youth, nor any of the Errors or Miscarriages of my elder Years; but strengthen me in my Weakness, and carry me safely thro' all my Afflictions. Let not my Faith waver, nor my Hope fail, nor my Charity be disordered. Let me die in Peace, and rest in Hope, and rise in Glory. *Amen.*

V. I know, O my God, thou sendest this Sickness for my Good, even to humble and reform me: O grant it may work that saving effect in me.

VI. *Lord*, create in me a true penitent Sorrow for all my Sins
past,

162 *Private Devotions.*

past, a stedfast Faith in Thee, and sincere Resolutions of Amendment for the time to come.

Deliver me from all Frowardness and Impatience, and give me an entire Resignation to thy Divine Will. O suffer not the Disease to take away my Senses, and do thou continually supply my Thoughts with holy Ejaculations. *Lord*, bless all Means that are used for my Recovery, and restore me to my Health in thy good time; but if otherwise thou hast appointed for me, *thy Will be done.*

From Bishop Cousins.

VII. O Sweet *Jesus*, I desire neither Life nor Death, but thy most holy Will; thou art the thing, O *Lord*, that I long for, be it unto me according to thy good Pleasure. If it be thy Will to have me die, receive my Soul, and grant that in the end with Thee I may receive everlasting Rest; if it be thy Will to have me live any longer upon Earth, give me Grace to amend the rest of

of my
to Gl
with
liveth
Work

A PR

VIII.

of ou
Righ
ing i
posel
nour
Good
love
to b
vant
sper
the
may
kind
of
my
to t
to
pra

Private Devotions. 163

of my Life, and with good Works to Glorifie thy holy Name, who with the *Father* and the *Holy Ghost* liveth and reigneth ever *One God*, World without End. *Amen.*

A PRAYER upon taking Physick.

From Bishop Taylor.

VIII. **O** most blessed *Jesus*, who art the great *Physician* of our Souls, and the Sun of Righteousness, arising with healing in thy Wings; and who disposest every accident to the Honour of thy *Father*, and to the Good and Comfort of them that love and serve Thee, be pleased to bless the Ministry of thy Servant in order to my Health, prosper the Medicines, and dispose the chance of my Sicknes, that I may feel the blessing and loving kindness of the *Lord*, in the ease of my Pain, and Restitution of my Health, that I being restored to the Society of the Living, and to thy solemn Assemblies, may praise Thee and thy Goodness
here

164 *Private Devotions.*

here in thy Courts, and hereafter
in thy Eternal Temple for ever
and ever. *Amen.*

PRAYERS for a Sick Child.

I. **O** *Almighty God* and most
Merciful *Father*, to whom
alone belong the Issues of Life
and *Death*! Look down from
Heaven, we humbly beseech
Thee, with the Eyes of Mercy
upon this Child now lying upon
the Bed of Sickness. Visit *Him*
[or *Her*] O *Lord*, with thy Salva-
tion; Deliver *him* in thy good
appointed time from *his* Bodily
pain, and save *his* Soul for thy
Mercies sake; that if it shall be
thy good Pleasure to prolong *his*
Days here on Earth, *he* may live
to Thee, and be an Instrument
of thy Glory, by serving Thee
faithfully, and doing good in *his*
Generation; or else receive *him*
into those Heavenly Habitations,
where the Souls of them that
sleep in the *Lord Jesus* enjoy per-
petual Rest and Felicity. Grant
this,

this, O
in the
Jesus Christ
eth wi
ever O
Amen.

II. *Weak*
Weak
pity o
ed wi
its Pa
it lies
raise
Thee
ture,
Fear,
and C
W
that
fit bo
what
fore
pose
whe
let it
presc
faith

this, O Lord, for thy Mercies sake
in the same thy Son our Lord Je-
sus Christ, who liveth and reign-
eth with Thee and the Holy Ghost,
ever One God, World without End.
Amen.

From Mr. Kettlewel.

II. Lord, pity the Troubles and
Weakness of this poor Child, and
pity our Sorrows who are afflict-
ed with it and for it. Ease it of
its Pains, and Strengthen it when
it lies Struggling for Life: And
raise it up again, if it may please
Thee, to grow in Years and Sta-
ture, and in Wisdom, and thy
Fear, and thereby to Comfort us,
and Glorifie Thee.

We believe, O Almighty Father,
that thou knowest best what is
fit both for it and us, and wilt do
what is best for both. And there-
fore we leave it to Thee to dis-
pose of as thou plearest. But
whether it be to Life or Death,
let it be thine in both, and either
preserve it to be thy true and
faithful Servant here on Earth, or
take

166 *Private Devotions.*

take it to the Blessedness of thy Children in the Kingdom of Heaven, thro' our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Thanksgiving for its Recovery.

From Mr. Kettlewel.

Blessed be thy Name, O Father of Mercies, for that thou hast heard us concerning this Child, and raised *him* [or *her*] up for thy Service and our Comfort.

And Lord, fill *his* Heart with Grace as thou hast done ours with Joy. Let Wisdom and Goodness still grow up with *him*, and as fast as *he* [or *she*] grows capable thereof, make *him* willing and careful to Honour and obey Thee. Let not Company corrupt *him*, nor youthful Lusts, as they come on, prevail against *his* Soul. But as now thou art the Preserver of *his* Life, be ever henceforward the Keeper of *his* Innocence; that whensoever thou shalt call *him* again in thy due time to meet Death, *he* may have

Com-

Comfort
a God
and sw
Peace,
Christ

Our
Let the

ers to
venin
have
Holy
And
the S
fice
wel
Dr.

ers
Ken
thod
Dyis
into
Ch
Tro

When
of L
sent
Goa
dat

Comfort in the Remembrance of
a Godly and Well-spent Life,
and sweetly fall asleep in thy
Peace, thro' the Merits of Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father which art, &c.

Let the Sick Person add these Prayers to the Morning, Noon and Evening Devotions; for larger helps, have recourse to Bishop Taylor's Holy Living and Dying; Bishop Andrews's Rules for Visitation of the Sick; Dr. Isham's daily Office for the Sick; Mr. Kettlewell's Death made Comfortable; Dr. Stanhope's Additional Prayers and Meditations to Tho. a Kempis; and Dr. Ashton's Method of Devotion for the Sick and Dying. But more especially look into the Daily Companion with Christian Supports, under the Troubles of this World, &c.

When the Sick Person is at the point of Departure, let the Minister be sent for to recommend his Soul to God in that excellent recommendatory Prayer for one at the point of

of Departure in the Church's Offices for Visitation of the Sick,

If no Minister can be had, then let the Relations or By-standers use the following Prayers.

From Bishop Andrews.

I. **L**ORD now lettest thou thy
 Servant depart in Peace.
 Into thy Hands, O Lord, we commend *his* [or *her*] Spirit, for thou hast Redeemed it, O Lord thou God of Truth. Bring *his* Soul out of Prison, that it may praise Thee, O deliver *him* from this Body of Death. Say unto *his* Soul, *I am thy Salvation*. Say unto *him*, *to Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*. Let *him* now feel the Salvation of *Jesus*, let *him* now feel the Anointing of *Christ*.

Guide thou *him* through the Valley and Shadow of Death, Let *him* see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living. O Lord command *his* Spirit to be receiv'd up to Thee in Peace.

Lord *Jesus*, receive *his* Spirit;
 and

and open to *him* the Gates of Everlasting Glory.

Let thy good Spirit conduct *him* into the Land of Righteousness, into thy holy Hill, and Heavenly Kingdom.

Send thine Angels to meet *him* and bring him into Abraham's Bosom. Place *him* in the Habitation of Light and Peace, of Joy and Gladness.

Receive *him* into the Arms of thy Mercy, and give *him* an Inheritance with thy Saints in Light.

There let him be with thy Elect Angels, thy blessed Saints departed, thy holy Prophets and Glorious Apostles, in all Joy, Glory, Felicity, and Happiness, for ever. *Amen.*

Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly, O Lord most Holy, O God most Mighty, O Holy and Merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge Eternal. suffer *him* not, at this his last Minute, for any Pains of Death to fall from Thee. *Amen.*

H

Or

Or this may be added if there be
Time, before the Dying Person
Departs.

O Lord our God, most Good and
Merciful. Thou art the God
of the Spirits of all Flesh. In thy
Hand is the Soul of every Living
thing, and the Breath of all Man-
kind. O keep the Soul of this
thy Servant, which is now de-
parting, together with *his* [or *her*]
Breath; and let it be so safe in
thy gracious Custody, as no kind
of harm may happen to it.

Thou that searchest the Heart,
feest *his* Infirmities, and thoroughly
understandeth both *his* Wants
and Dangers. Help *him*, O God;
and that instantly, and abundant-
ly in Proportion to them all. Let
thy Spirit be with *him*, and thy
Graces in *him*, and thy Comforts
upon *him*, in such excellent Mea-
sures; as that Satan may see it is
in vain to tempt *him*, and be a-
fraid to come near *him*. Compose
his Mind, abate *his* Miseries, and
strengthen *him* to endure the

Trou

Trou-
ble
may
grant
Assur-
thine
Cour-
ing e
his fu-
abide
and
throu-
Death
feel
now
Bad
ceiv
com-
dee-
rece-
ven
whe
a B
she
and
He
laid

Troubles thou shalt inflict. Perfect his Repentance that thou mayst give him Pardon; and grant him thy Favour and full Assurance of it. Guard him by thine Angels, Guide him by thy Council, and let nothing be wanting either to his present Peace, or his future Blessedness. Let him abide in Communion with Thee, and thy Church; and as he walks through the Valley and Shadow of Death, let him neither Fear, nor feel any thing that is Evil. But now the Hour is come, that his Body must die: Lord Jesus receive his Spirit. To Thee we commend it, whose Blood redeemed it; receive it, good Lord, receive it we beseech Thee; even into thy Father's Presence, where is fulness of Joy, and assign it a Place at his Right Hand, where there are Pleasures for evermore.

Thou, O God, art our Hope and Strength, and a very present Help in Trouble; thou hast never fail'd them that seek Thee. But

172 *Private Devotions.*

whilst we are speaking, thou hast promised to hear; and before we call, thou hast promised to answer; and thou hast said, thou keepest thy Promise for ever. Hear us, *Lord*, and graciously answer us; even for thy own Promise sake, and for thy Dear Son our Saviour's sake; who hath commanded us to pray in his Name, and hath taught us to pray in these Words;

*Our Father which art in Heaven,
&c.*

A PRAYER to be used by a private Person, or a Family, where one is Dead in it, which may be said at the end of Morning, Noon, and Evening Prayer; till the Body of the deceased Person be interr'd.

Most just art thou, O God, in all thy Dealings with us; and our Punishment is less than our Iniquities deserve. And therefore we desire to submit with Humility and Patience to this sad Dispensation of thy Divine Providence.

dence.
it to us
hast m
Grace
ly ent
Thy
out o
which
Good
us.
say, f
the H
the H
Deat
Bless
nille
L
Cha
ful
our
mor
Let
tue
ple
his
wi
wa
the
Fe

dence. Be pleased so to sanctifie it to *us*, that at the breach thou hast made in this Family, thy Grace and Mercy may abundantly enter, and flow in upon *us*. Thy Property is to bring Good out of Evil: O turn that Evil which is now befallen *us*, to the Good and Benefit of every one of *us*. That so we may be able to say, from happy Experience, *that the House of Mourning is better than the House of Feasting*; while the Death of our Friend (thro' thy Blessing) shall conduce and Minister to our Spiritual advantage.

Let the sight of *his* [or *her*] Change make us the more mindful of our own, and the Sense of our Loss make us cleave the more closely to Thee our God. Let the Remembrance of *his* Virtues, make us follow *his* Example. And the hope we have of *his* being Blessed, cause us to press with the more earnestness towards the Mark for the prize of the high Calling of God in *Christ Jesus*.

174 *Private Devotions.*

If our Sins, O Lord, (as we have reason to fear) were the occasion of this thy heavy Stroke: O let it awaken us to true Repentance, and make us henceforth so watchful over our ways, as that we may presumptuously *Sin no more, lest worse things yet should come unto us.* But let the Death of thy Servant, strike us with a most lively Sense of our Mortality. With such a Sense of it, as may cause us so thoroughly to die to Sin, and live to Grace; as that when we die to Nature, we may depart in Peace and hope of Glory.

We evidently see before our Eyes, that *Death is the end of all Men*; O let us that are living, lay it to Heart; so lay it to Heart as to despise the World, to abhor all Evil, to delight in thy Word, to study thy Will, to observe thy Law, to seek thy Love, and to take the best Course, and all possible Care to promote thy Honour, and our own and others Happiness and Sal-

Salva
the w
have
us, a
Heav

An
portu
vante
ing,
restle
Teat
pray
we in
to th
mise
Come
so w
may
Sou
mos
fede
wh
Glo
&c

Salvation, that so when we go the way of all the Earth, we may have thy Presence go along with us, and give us rest Eternal in Heaven.

And regard, O *Christ*, the importunate Desires of those thy Servants, who long for thy appearing, and Night and Day with restless Supplications, Sighs and Tears, do humbly and heartily pray and sue for it. Hear them we intreat Thee, and according to thy last and most gracious promise to thy militant Church. *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly*; that so we, with all thy holy Ones, may together be glorified both in Soul and Body, and enjoy a most perfect and endless Blessedness by being with Thee, where thou art, to behold thy Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Our Father which art in Heaven,
&c.

A THANKSGIVING after Recovery from a Sickneſs, to be ſaid by the Perſon himſelf, who is reſtored to Health, which may be uſed by a Family for or with him, with a little eaſie Alteration of Us for Me, and Him, and the like.

Most Glorious God, and our moſt kind and Gracious Father, thou art Good, and thou doſt Good, and of thy Goodneſs to us there is no End. And therefore it is, that I have Liberty and Occaſion, to come now before Thee, not only with Prayer, but joyful Praise and Thankſgiving.

My very Soul doth magnifie Thee, O Lord, and all that is within me doth praise thy Holy Name, for the many unſpeakable Mercies, and Favours I have received from Thee. For My Creation, Redemption, and the various and excellent means of My Salvation; for that Peace and Quietneſs I feel in my Mind: For that meaſure of Health and
Strength

Strength I find in *my* Body, and for that Plenty of good Things I enjoy in the World, which thou deniest to Thousands much better than *my* self.

More especially I laud Thee for thy signal Mercy to * *me* thy Servant * Or this.

in relieving † *me* in, † Him or Her.
and releasing *me* from that heavy Affliction || He or She.
wherewith || I was

Oppressed; and whereby if thou hadst not interposed and prevented, I might have been quite overwhelm'd and swallowed up.

O cause *Me* to understand, that as it was thy Hand which corrected *Me*, so it was thy Arm which supported and delivered *Me*. And let the Sense of thy Fatherly Kindness be perpetually a prevailing Obligation upon *me*, to love and obey Thee in the remainder of *My* Life, with all Zealous Sincerity.

And may what I have felt, and what I have seen of thy Power
H s and

178 *Private Devotions.*

and Security, in thy late dealings with *me*; make *Me* fear and stand in awe of thy Great Majesty. Let it replenish *My* Soul with such awful Fear of Thee, as may keep me from offending Thee, lest by Sin I provoke Thee to throw *Me* into fresh and more grievous Miseries.

But if thy Wisdom sees fit to exercise *me* with Sufferings; thy Holy Will be done, O *Lord*: Only fit *me* for them, I humbly beseech Thee, uphold *me* in them, and assist *me* under them; teaching *me* to improve them, and granting *me* a seasonable and happy Issue out of them. That so my *Afflictions, which are but for a moment, may work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*: And I may have Cause not only to set forth thy Praises here, but to sing Everlasting Hallelujahs to Thee in the Mansions above; where all Tears shall be wiped from my Eyes, and Sin and Misery shall be no more. To
which

which blessed Place do thou, dear Lord, in thy infinite Mercy lead me, for his sake who redeemed me, even thy Christ and my Jesus; who hath given me Assurance, that whatever I ask in his Name, I shall receive. In his Name therefore, and in his Words, I humbly conclude my unworthy Supplications. *Our Father, &c.*

Thy Grace, O Lord Jesus Christ, thy Love, O Heavenly Father, thy Comfort and Consolation, O most blessed Spirit, be with me, and remain with me, now, and to the very Hour of my Death, and for evermore. *Amen.*

A Devout Prayer to be said at any time, but especially when you hear a Passing Bell.

O Lord God, I confess my Iniquities, and my Sins are before Thee, secret as well as known Sins: Create in me a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me. Cleanse the wicked Thoughts of mine Heart by the Inspiration of thy

180 *Private Devotions.*

thy *Holy Spirit* ; forgive my wicked Thoughts as well as my evil Words and Actions. Give me thy Grace, that I may not only leave Sin for a time, but that I may loath Sin ; that I may look upon *Jesus Christ* not only as a *Saviour*, which the very worst of Men would be glad to do at their Death, but as a Sovereign to Rule and Reign in my Heart. I am sensible it is in vain for me, with wicked *Balaam*, to desire the *Death of the Righteous*, if I do not live the *Life of the Righteous*. While I live in the World, O let me not be of the World ; but be pleased to endue me with so great a Measure of thy *Spirit*, that I may make it the great Pleasure of my Life to do Thee Service, whose Service is perfect Freedom. Make me Humble, Charitable and Obedient, willing to do good, not only to my Friends, but to my very Enemies, heartily forgiving them, as I desire to be forgiven, and returning to them Good for Evil.

Evil
latic
fact
kind
to t
som
me.
He
ful
wh
me
fo
my
Af
an
vi
in
le
T
p
f
t
i
S
a
i
f
t

Private Devotions. 181

Evil. But, *Lord*, to all my Relations, Friends, and kind Benefactors, return their kindness double in-
to their own Bo-
soms. Take from

Here name those who are nearly related, and kind-est to you.

me, *Good Lord*, both in my Health and Sickness, all that sinful misbecoming Impatience which so much prevails over me: Let not the Fear of Death so much terrifie and discompose my Spirits; but so moderate my Affections, that I may willingly and entirely submit to thy Divine Will and Pleasure, whether in Life or Death, Natural or Violent. But I most humbly beseech Thee, Heavenly *Father*, to prepare me for a better World, before thou takest me out of this: to prepare me, O *Lord*, by sealing to me a Pardon for all my Sins past, and giving me such an assured well grounded Faith in *Christ Jesus*, and such an Application of his imputative Righteousness, that when I come to die,

182 *Private Devotions.*

die, I may have nothing else to do but to die, and surrender, tho' a sinful, yet a penitent Soul into the Hands of a gracious Redeemer. While I live here, give me Grace that I may have dying Thoughts, that when I come to die, I may have living Hopes. Grant that I may live here in thy Fear, die in thy Favour, and at the End of my Days attain the End of my Hopes, even the Salvation of my Soul, in and thro' Christ Jesus my Blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

When you are invited to a Funeral, as you are going to the House of Mourning, it is very convenient to entertain some such Meditations as these, --- upon the Shortness of Life, the certainty of Death, and the uncertainty of the time and manner of it. --- On Eternity, and on the great Account you must give of all you have done in the Body, whether it be Good or Evil. --- And because I would not keep you upon such

melan-

*melan
there
on
that
of
Hea
hat
and
Joy
nor
en
co
fo
con
do
Th
fr
a
a
f
f*

melancholy Thoughts as these too long, therefore I would have you think upon the Joys of Heaven, of that Rest that remains for the People of God; of that better Country, that is, an Heavenly one; of that City that hath a Foundation, whose Maker and Builder is God; and of those Joys which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it ever entred into the Heart of Man to conceive what God hath laid up for them that love him. When we come to Heaven, there we shall be past doing, as well as past suffering Evil. There all Tears shall be wiped away from our Eyes, and we shall obtain Joy and Gladness of Heart; and Sorrow and Sighing shall fly away. The Blessings and Comforts which are reserved for us in the other Life are sincere, pure, and unmixt. There shall be no sadness or bitterness intermingled with them. Our present Comforts are not such. Here our finest Gold is mingled with Dust, and our purest Grain is blended with Chaff, our whitest Flour hath its Bran, and our sweetest Roses have their Pricks; our highest Pleasures go off with Pain, and our best Delights have somewhat in them, or somewhat with them

184 Private Devotions.

them that damps and weakens them.

But in Heaven our Joys shall be pure and Eternal. There shall be Light without Darkness, and Peace without Trouble, Mirth without Heaviness, and Ease without Affliction, Happiness without Care, and Pleasure without Complaint or the least Lamentations. We shall then enjoy Health without Sickness, Joy without Sorrow, and fulness of Happiness to all Eternity. Not for Days, or Weeks, or Months, or Years, or Ages; but for ever and ever. And This is that which is above all; we shall be ever with the Lord, and shall see him, who shall be all in all to us, yea, we shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. Such Meditations as these I would have you exercised in, which are of greater Use, and more becoming the Solemnities of Funerals, than idle and unprofitable Discourse, which is too common in Burial Houses.

A Prayer to be said by one that intends to go to a Funeral.

O Most Great and Glorious God, I now desire to present both my Soul and Body to Thee, but

but cannot tell where I shall be the next moment, or whether I shall live to breath out the desires of my Soul once more unto Thee, for in thy Hand is the Breath of our Nostrils, and when thou pleasest we are turned to Destruction.

I see, O Lord, now that thy late Providence has awakened me to think of my Departure, how unprofitable my too many Cares are for the Things of this Life, how trifling all my Pleasures, and that there is no solid Happiness but in thy Love, and a pious Hope of Immortality.

Make me so wise as to understand and consider my latter end, to remember the shortness of my Time: And teach me so to number my Days, that I may apply my Heart unto Wisdom. Let me never allow my self in any Course of living, wherein I shall be loth to be found when I come to die. Help me so to live, as at the Hour of Death, I shall wish I had lived, and so to make ready for
Death

186 *Private Devotions.*

Death all my Days, that at my last Day, I may have nothing to do but to die.

Let me not be arrested with unprovided and violent Death, that I be neither unready in my Accounts, nor snatch'd hence with an imperfect Duty, nor surpriz'd in an act of Sin, nor called upon when my Lamp is untrimmed; let my Death be neither violent nor untimely, hasty nor unblest, but after the ordinary Visitation of Men, having in it an excellent Patience, and an exemplary Piety, and the greatest Sense and Demonstration of thy Eternal Mercy. Preserve, O God, my Reason and Religion, my Faith and my Hope, my Sense and my Speech perfect and useful till the last of my Days, and grant *that I may die the Death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like to his,* free from Debt and deadly Sin; having first discharged all my Obligations of Justice, and made competent Provision for my Relations,

tions,
miser
Depa
blesse
sanct
may
Lord
A
ly T
tions
Wo
con
and
gran
tha
figh
net
ran
of
T
the
an
th
to

tions, that none of mine be left miserable and unprovided in my Departure ; but grant that being blessed by thy Providence, and sanctified with thy Spirit, they may be for ever Servants of the Lord *Jesus*.

And continue in my Mind holy Thoughts, and pious Inclinations, that my Love to this World may always be such as is consistent with my Love of Thee, and my Hopes of Heaven, and grant that the nearer I come to that Eternal World, the clearer sight I may have of my Happiness, and attain the greater Assurance of thy Love, and be fuller of Joy in hope of thy Glory. This Mercy, O most *Merciful Father* vouchsafe to give unto me and all thy faithful Servants, through *Jesus Christ* my Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen*

Our Father, &c.

Eja

188 *Private Devotions.*

Ejaculations to be used as we are going to Burial-Houses.

Better it is to go to the House of Mourning, than to go to the House of Feasting, for Death is the end of all Men, and we that are living should lay it to our Heart.

Whatsoever Death the just Man is prevented with, he shall be at Rest.

To whom to live is Christ; to those to die is Gain.

God is our God for ever and ever, he shall be our Guide unto Death.

So teach us to number our Days that we may apply our Hearts to Wisdom.

Vouchsafe me, O Lord, thy sweet and reviving Influences at my last Hour; to support and comfort me in my Departure hence.

All the Days of my appointed time will I wait until my Change come.

I shall go to Him [or Her] but He [or She] shall not return to me.

O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of Thee to a Man that liveth at rest in his Possession?

Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be required of Thee, and then whose shall these Things be?

Watch therefore, for ye know not what Hour your Lord doth come.

Dear

Private Devotions. 189

Dear God, fill my Soul with such generous Courage as may make me not to fear *Death*; with such Heavenly Consolations as may make me pleased with it; with such Hearty Love to Thee, as may make me long and groan earnestly for it, as a Translation or Passage to thy Eternal Kingdom.

O possess my Mind with such Thoughts and Hopes, and Desires of thy Presence to which *Death* leads me; that I may reckon it a Privilege or special Blessing, as opening me a way to immortal Happiness. And what time or in what place or manner soever thou shalt send it; let me willingly and cheerfully submit unto it, rendering Thanks to God who hath given me the Victory over it, and great Benefits by it.

Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return.

The Living know that they shall die.

Keep Innocency and take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a Man Peace at last.

They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever.

Lord,

190 *Private Devotions.*

O Lord, let me know my end, and the number of my Days, that I may be convinced how long I have to live.

O spare me a little, that I may recover my Strength, before I go hence, and be no more seen.

Glory be to the Father, &c.

Note, That any of these Ejaculations may be used as we are in the Burial-Houses, or following the Corps to the Grave, or at any other time.

A Prayer for a due Consideration of our latter End, to be said at our return home, which may be used at any other time.

O Most Merciful God and Father; I the unworthiest of all thy Children, prostrate in thy Fear and sacred Presence, do from the bottom of my Heart most earnestly desire Thee to forgive my Offences, and cover all my Sins, and to shed down into me such excellent Perfections as may cause me to abhor all evil Ways, and to walk in Innocency and Righteousness before Thee so long as I live. Assist me, O Lord, with thy Holy Spirit Sanctify me, O God, with thy Heavenly Gifts; Guard me by thy Glorious and

Private Devotions. 191

and mighty Angels; Govern me by thy wise and watchful Providence; Raise my Mind above all vain and earthly Things; and fill my Heart with holy Affections and Heavenly Desires. Keep me in continual Thoughts of my Mortality, of the Transitoriness of my Life, and the certainty of my Death, and also of the possible nearness of the same. That considering my abode upon Earth is but short, and my departure most sure, and may also be sudden; I may not venture to lie down and rest in Sin, or to run on in corrupt and unhallowed Courses, but may follow after Righteousness with all my Might, and work whilst it is called to Day; as knowing that the Night cometh when no Man can Work.

I know and am fully sensible, O my God, that Dust I am, and unto Dust I must return. That I have no abiding City upon Earth; but am a Pilgrim and Stranger as all my Fathers were. That my Breath is in my Nostrils, and my Life is but for a Moment, and when a few Years or Days are come, I shall go the way from whence I shall not return. Then the Earth shall receive my Body, and Heaven or Hell shall

Private Devotions.

shall receive my Soul, and unspeakable Happiness or intolerable Misery shall be my Portion to eternal Ages. O that these Thoughts might sink deep into me, that these Considerations might make strong and lasting Impressions upon me, That thinking seriously what I am, and whither I am going; I may so prepare for my final Change, as to be blessed in it when it comes. To which end be thou my God, I humbly beseech Thee, and my Guide unto Death, and so lead me to it, and assist me in it, and carry me thro' it, as that it may be a Passage to Everlasting Life, and an happy Translation of me to the Triumphant Joys and endless Felicity of the State above.

These humble Desires, with all my various and urgent Necessities, which thou, O God, knowest much better than my self, I earnestly commend to thine Infinite Pity, in the Name and Words of the ever Blessed Jesus, saying as he hath taught and commanded me;

Our Father, &c.

F I N I S.